



## Frida at the Broad

See page 13

Juan Guzmán (1911 - 1982). Frida Kahlo en el American British Cowdray Hospital [Frida Kahlo at the American British Cowdray Hospital], 1950. Courtesy Fundación Televisa's Collection and Archive.

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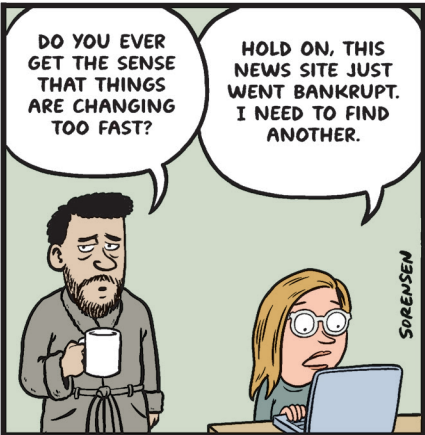
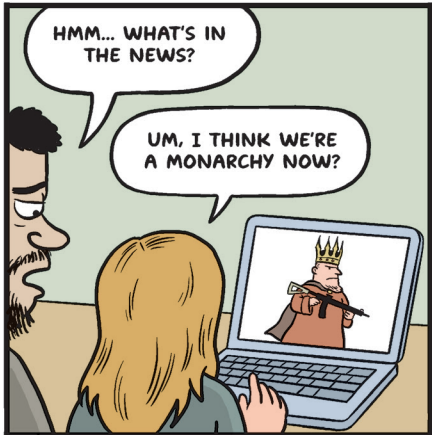
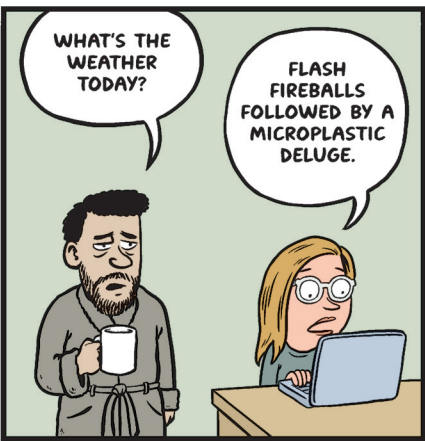
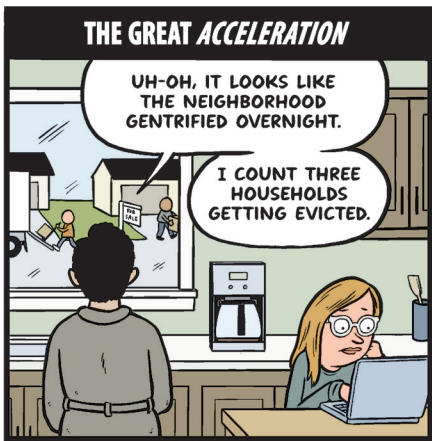
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Juan Guzmán (1911 - 1982). Frida Kahlo en el American British Cowdray Hospital [Frida Kahlo at the American British Cowdray Hospital], 1950. Courtesy Fundación Televisa's Collection and Archive.

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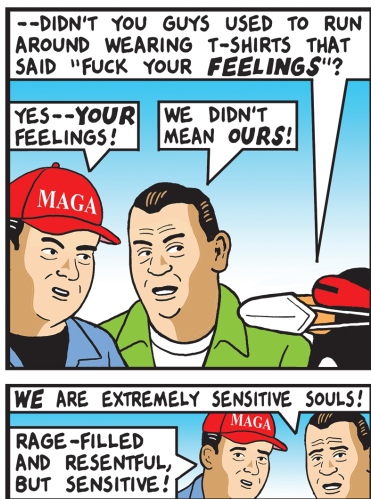
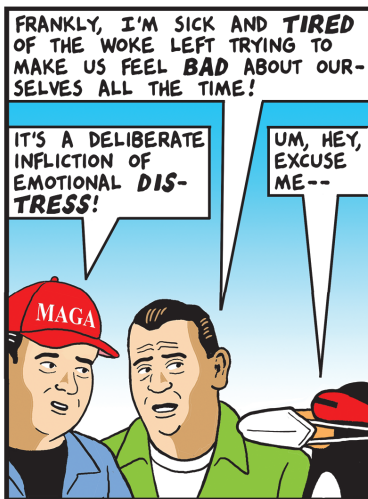
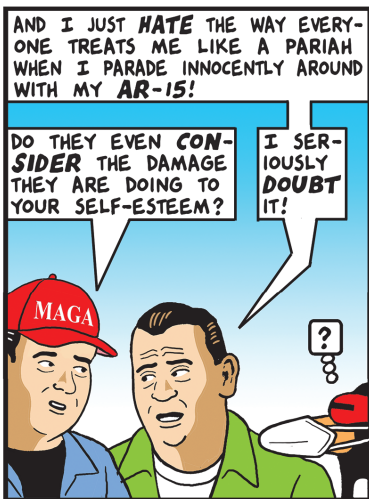
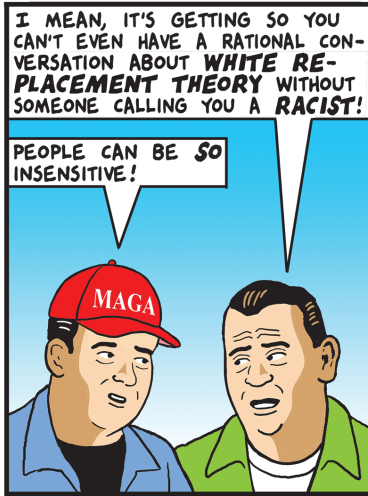
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by TOM TOMORROW



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## PULSE

## NEWS &amp; OPINION

# Regulators demand action over BWL pollution in Lansing

## Water contamination probe starts at Erickson plant

State and federal regulators are requiring the Lansing Board of Water & Light to take steps to investigate and address heavy metals and other contaminants that are leaking from toxic coal ash ponds near the Erickson Power Station into groundwater, and possibly into drinking water.

An investigation into the pollution's scope and subsequent remediation efforts could take months. Officials with the Michigan Department of Environment Great Lakes and Energy and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency met privately Tuesday afternoon to discuss how to coordinate enforcement of state and federal rules regarding the pollution that BWL has violated.

"We're continuing to work with the Board of Water & Light on meeting the groundwater investigation requirements and getting the nature and extent of the contamination defined," said Alexandra Clark, an enforcement manager with EGLE. "Meanwhile we will continue our close collaboration with EPA to understand their next steps and what makes the most sense in terms of the state's specific actions."

BWL detected high levels of lithium, boron, TDS and molybdenum leaching from its three coal ash ponds in 2020. Though it's unclear exactly when those leaks started, the Erickson Power Station, which is off Canal Road in Eaton County, has operated its coal ash ponds since 1974.

BWL's administration kept the issue quiet until City Pulse reported on EPA documents that detailed the pollution and confirmed with EGLE that the agency is taking enforcement action.

Among violations at the state level are a failure to prevent groundwater contamination, obtain proper licenses

"If I was at EGLE or a manager at BWL, my first priority would be to ensure that people's drinking water is not contaminated. To spend any more time drilling wells and sampling before you go and sample the community doesn't make any sense, and is adding an unnecessary delay and perhaps endangering people's health."

— Lisa Evans, attorney for the environmental group Earthjustice



## EARTHJUSTICE

and keep a proper distance between the ponds and groundwater. The state also dinged BWL for a failure to install proper pond liners, which are designed to prevent pollution.

The EPA didn't immediately respond to a request for comment. EGLE officials said BWL — at least so far — has been cooperative amid the state and federal investigation, noting that the utility is working closely with state and federal regulators to implement its cleanup plan.

Groundwater, aquifers, and surface water that may be contaminated are all interconnected, and pollution in each presents separate sets of problems — each demanding different remedies. BWL has already detected groundwater contamination. Four monitoring wells that it recently dug determined that the plume is migrating down gradient. However, no one knows how large that plume might be. As part of its enforcement process, EGLE has required BWL to dig up four more wells to help determine precisely how far the plume has migrated. It must also continue to dig new wells further out from the ponds until regulators are no longer able to detect pollution.

While the contamination presents a serious threat to those who drink contaminated water, it's possible that the plume hasn't reached drinking water

supplies. And though two municipal wells are down gradient from the ponds, those were decommissioned and are no longer in use — which means that the plume likely hasn't contaminated supplies for a broad piece of the region's population. It's also possible that the wells were contaminated prior to being decommissioned.

Dozens of private wells that are down gradient from and within a mile of the ponds remain active, EPA documents show, and most pull water from the bedrock aquifer. There's no way to tell if drinking water supplies are contaminated without testing private wells or digging more wells that reach the bedrock. EGLE is requiring BWL to do the latter.

BWL has not tested nearby drinking wells. EGLE officials, however, said they will test two nearby wells "out of an abundance of caution." Depending on what they find in those local aquifers, the state could then require more of the dozens of wells within a mile to be tested.

BWL's inaction on the potential drinking water pollution drew criticism from Lisa Evans, an attorney with environmental watchdog Earthjustice, who said the state and BWL should immediately test drinking water wells in the vicinity that are down gradient from the pond.

"If I was at EGLE or a manager at BWL, my first priority would be to ensure that people's drinking water is not contaminated," she said. "To spend any more time drilling wells and sampling before you go and sample the

community doesn't make any sense, and is adding an unnecessary delay and perhaps endangering people's health."

A spokesperson for EGLE said the risk of well contamination is low, and "in situations like this, we typically proceed with site investigation first, and allow new data to inform next steps."

Neighbors have not yet been alerted of the potential for contamination as state law only requires it when contamination is confirmed on their property. EGLE said it will proactively alert property owners if information suggests a significant risk.

Evans noted that the percentage of people of color and low-income residents in the local area are higher than the state average, defining Lansing as an "environmental justice" community under EPA standards. Evans noted that means residents who may be affected are also more likely to have limited access to healthcare, in turn making them more vulnerable to pollutants.

"These are communities where the state should be particularly concerned that the water residents are drinking is healthy," she said.

If wells are found to be contaminated, then BWL would have to provide whole house filters or run a municipal line to the property. Groundwater contamination may require BWL to extract water and either dispose of it or treat it and re-inject it, EGLE said.

Surface water — which includes wetlands, streams, rivers and lakes — could also be contaminated by the coal ash ponds. EGLE is also forcing BWL to test a groundwater-fed wetland down gradient from the ponds. Fish could be another potential exposure pathway.

Moreover, research shows that boron is also phytotoxic at low levels, and EGLE fears it may harm the wetland's plant life. However, it's likely that the contamination would become diluted by the time it travels to larger waterways and won't cause problems downstream.

BWL has also indicated that it will work to remove ash from the ponds and close them.

— TOM PERKINS

**The general manager of the Lansing Board of Water & Light responds to last week's story. See Page 10.**

**The BWL gave "disingenuous explanations" about the coal ash pond issue. See The Edit on Page 9.**



# Eleven candidates emerge for City Council vacancy

**E**leven people have applied to serve as the appointed replacement for disgraced First Ward Lansing City Councilman Brandon Betz, who resigned about halfway through his term this month to focus on “personal relationships and health.”

Each applicant will be interviewed by the Council on Monday (Jan. 31), when the Council will settle on three to be interviewed the next day, after which the Council will choose. The winner needs four votes, since the Council is temporarily down to seven members. Betz’ replacement will serve through Dec. 31; a special election in November will determine who will fill the final year of Betz’ four-year term, which expires on Dec. 31, 2023.

**Here’s a look at the candidates:**

## Undra Brown

Brown, 23, labels himself a “serial entrepreneur” with investments in several local businesses, including Lansing Mobile Detail and Rogue Strategy Group. As a “disruptor” at Rogue Strategy Group, Brown said that he primarily lobbies for the cannabis industry. His consulting firm is managed by Scott Hagerstrom, a GOP operative who helped run Donald Trump’s presidential campaign in 2016 and has faced sanctions for pushing election conspiracies.

As the co-founder of the local “Decriminalize Nature” chapter, Brown said that he’s also heavily involved in the growing statewide movement to legalize entheogenic plants and psychedelic mushrooms. Brown served as the campaign manager for former East Lansing Mayor Aaron Stephens. He also led a fledgling recall effort against Betz alongside Hagerstrom and attorney Elizabeth Abdnour.

A 12-year Lansing resident, he graduated from Eastern High School and studied economics at Lansing Community College. He interned in the City Clerk’s Office.

“I like to bring people together,” Brown said. “I like to have conversations. I’m a businessman, so I like to listen and come up with useful and bold solutions to solve problems.”

**Top priorities:** General transparency in government; removing the limit on the number of pot growers and retailers; police reforms and hiring more social workers.

## Caitlin Cavanagh

Cavanagh, 33, who bills herself as a “nationally renowned expert in juvenile justice,” is an assistant professor and associate director at Michigan State University’s School of Criminal Justice, where she focuses on parent-child relationships and the criminal justice system. She’s an adviser for the family divi-



Brown

*Undra Brown, Ben Dowd, Brian Daniels, Glenn Lopez and Tirstan Walters said they voted for Mayor Andy Schor in November. Sam Klahn, Ryan Kost and John Schneider said they voted for former Councilwoman Kathie Dunbar. Caitlin Cavanaugh, LaSandra Jones and Farhan Sheikh-Omar declined to say.*

*Dowd, Daniels, Jones, Klahn, Kost and Schneider said they voted for Betz in 2019. Lopez said he voted for former Councilwoman Jody Washington. Brown and Walters didn’t live (or vote) in the First Ward in 2019. Sheikh-Omar said that he forgot how he voted. Cavanaugh declined to comment.*

sion of Ingham County’s 30th Circuit Court, a volunteer-in-training for CASA for Kids Inc. and vice president of the non-profit Steiner Chorale in East Lansing.

A Lansing resident for six years, she has a Ph.D. in developmental psychology from University of California Irvine. She is a volunteer election worker and a feline foster mom through the county animal control office.

“I come from a family of public servants and I have always wanted to continue that generational legacy through service to the Lansing community,” she said. “I really see myself as a community-minded person and as a public servant. I see the City Council as a natural marriage to my volunteerism and career expertise.”

**Top priorities:** Mitigating gun violence, including more police training; equitably distributing city resources and local grant funding, particularly pandemic-related cash for small businesses; “infrastructure.”

## Brian Daniels

Daniels, 35, is a U.S. Army veteran, a Purple Heart recipient and the founder and head trainer of Empower Lansing, a boxing and fitness studio. He is on the Parks Board; the Lansing Regional Chamber of Commerce included him on its “10 Over the Next Ten” list.

Daniels grew up in the Churchill Downs neigh-

borhood. He studied at Lansing Community College and the American Academy of Personal Training.

“I work every day with all different kinds of people. One thing I always notice is that people never seem to feel heard. One of the biggest issues is that we’ve all stopped listening to each other and just want to argue,” he said.

**Top priorities:** Helping create unity and seek solutions to gun violence; ensuring new housing projects remain affordable and existing ones stay up to code.



Daniels

## Ben Dowd

Dowd, 39, is an associate director at the Community Economic Development Association of Michigan, the interim executive director of the Old Town Commercial Association and a board member of Suits and the City in Lansing.

Dowd has lived in Lansing for seven years, the last 18 months in the First Ward. He has degrees in business management and human resources from Colorado Technical University and worked in banking for about 15 years.

“There’s a need for strong representation on the Council in Old Town, on the north side and the rest of the ward,” he said. “In some cases, there has been a lack of collaboration and communication with the Council, and I think I have the ability to step in and be a strong advocate and a voice for the ward.”

**Top priorities:** Increasing the number of officers assigned to community policing and bolstering departmental transparency; strengthening resources for small businesses.



Dowd

## LaSandra Jones

Jones, 66, is a lifelong resident of Lansing who retired in 2015 after working for about 25 years as a supervisor for the state Treasury Department. She has been president of the Potter-Walsh Neighborhood Association since 2016 and regularly volunteers for the Retired & Senior Volunteer Program of Lansing, or RSVP, a nonprofit run by Council Vice President Carol Wood.

An Eastern grad, after retirement he earned a bachelor’s in ministry leadership from Cornerstone University.

“We really haven’t had the right representation in



# Candidates

from page 6

the First Ward,” Jones said. “I’m very community oriented. I love people. My real goal is to meet community needs and see people be successful — no matter their income, background or status.”

**Top priorities:** Host voter education meetings during election season; allocate more resources to street repair and maintenance; educate local residents about home-improvement grant resources.



Jones

## Sam Klahn

Klahn, 25, grew up in the First Ward and graduated from Eastern. He’s unemployed, but most recently worked for the Boone and Crockett Club, a wildlife conservation nonprofit in Minnesota.

His community work includes co-founding Lansing Area Mutual Aid, in the pandemic to connect people and organizations with various community resources.

“The First Ward really needs a long-term resident who can establish relationships and trust — someone who knows the community and city government well,” he said. “The First Ward really needs basic representation and a return to normalcy.”

**Top priorities:** Promote vaccinations and COVID-19 testing; provide help to stimulate the economy; connect residents with various financial resources and opportunities for educational advancement.

Klahn said he will withdraw his application if a “more qualified” candidate applies.

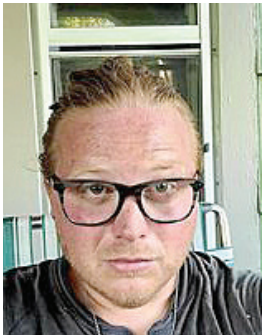


Klahn

## Ryan Kost

Kost, 34, is a central control operator for the state Department of Technology, Management and Budget. He is secretary of the Eastside Neighborhood Organization and vice president of Foster Your Neighborhood.

Kost grew up in Lansing, moved to Dewitt and came back about a decade ago. He briefly attended Central



Kost

Michigan University. He also made headlines last year for putting in hundreds of hours cleaning up roadside trash in the First Ward.

“My roots run deep in Lansing,” he said. “My leadership style has always been about listening. I’m also a big collaborator. I would work with my colleagues to better the lives of the people in the First Ward.”

**Top priorities:** Ensure residents are involved — or at least notified — when decisions are made affecting their lives; engage directly with residents to decide which way to vote; listen to residents.

## Glenn Lopez

Lopez, 68, is a lifelong resident of the First Ward who retired last year after 44 years at the Lansing School District as an instructional assistant, lunchroom supervisor and gym teacher, among other positions.

He graduated from Eastern and has volunteered for many after-school events and the Special Olympics Michigan.

“I was never interested in politics, but with all the issues going on right now, I think I can do some good,” he said. “Lansing’s north side has been neglected. There just seems to be a lot of stuff that’s not being done, and I want to help.”

**Top priorities:** Create a more supportive environment for local teenagers to mitigate gun violence, including more playgrounds and after-school activities; repair northside homes and clean up trash.



Lopez

## John Schneider

Schneider, 35, is a senior organizer for For Our Future, a left-leaning advocacy group designed to “lift up the voices of people and grassroots organizations to drive real change.” He also volunteers for local community garden projects.

Schneider, who graduated from Haslett High School, has lived in Lansing for 12 years. He studied computer science, electrical engineering, psychology and theology for seven years at Spring Arbor University. He has also worked for Outer Graphics, Liquid Web and Neogen.

“I want to make sure that we’re all working together to build a stronger and better Lansing by building on the progress that we’ve already made,” he said. “I don’t think that the Council is broken and needs to be fixed. I don’t have magic solutions. I’m just excited about keeping the city moving in a positive direction.”

**Top priorities:** Expedite bringing back one social



Schneider

worker to the Police Department and fund additional police social workers; help to keep the City Council “on track” following Betz’ resignation.

Schneider said he was reluctant to outline any more specific priorities, in part because he’s unfamiliar with the Council and because he simply wants to help ensure the First Ward is “adequately represented” throughout the rest of the year.

## Farhan Sheikh-Omar

Sheikh-Omar, 27, is an instructional assistant and substitute teacher for the Lansing School District and a political science student at LCC. He bills himself as a “community activist” with strong ties to several local nonprofit organizations, including the Village Lansing and The Fledge.

Sheikh-Omar, an Eastern grad, has lived in Lansing for 16 years. He’s the only applicant who ran against Betz in 2019. He was fourth last year in the mayoral primary. Much of his campaign centered on public safety reforms.

“The biggest challenge facing the First Ward is a lack of visionary leadership,” he said. “I will work hard to focus on all aspects of community life, including health, crime prevention, business development, family stability and housing. I want to help in regaining trust with residents. Without trust, there can be no progress.”

**Top priorities:** Beef up code enforcement standards and hold landlords accountable for poor living conditions; invest in various community-driven, evidence-based approaches to mitigate gun violence; keep the community engaged with transparent governance.



Sheikh-Omar

## Tirstan Walters

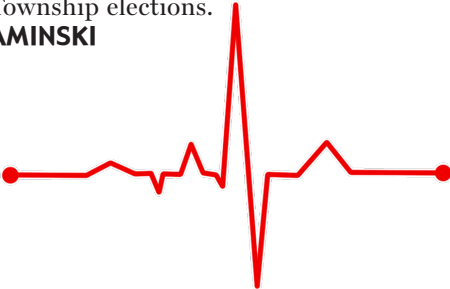
Walters, 22, is a departmental technician for the state Health and Human Services Department who focuses on Medicaid waste, fraud and abuse.

He moved from Lapeer to Lansing in 2019 when he transferred to Michigan State University to finish his bachelor’s in geography. He has volunteered at Constellation Cat Cafe and as a poll worker in Meridian Township elections.

— KYLE KAMINSKI



Walters







Several readers recognized last month's Eye for Design. However, it was Samuel Adam Riley who as the first to respond wins the Eye for Design mug! The featured detail is from the large stained-glass front window at Saint Thomas Aquinas Catholic Church, 955 Alton Road, East Lansing. According to the church's website, the window measures 50 feet across by 60 feet high. It was designed by the late artist Conrad Pickel, whose work also includes the Guinness World Records' largest faceted window in Illinois.

On a more personal note, this will be my last column for the City Pulse. It has been fun keeping an eye out for all of the interesting and/or beautiful architectural details around the city these past few years, as well as reading the messages sent in by readers. I wish you all well, but it's time for me to move on and to turn this space over to someone else. If you have a keen eye and enjoy writing, reach out to City Pulse publisher Berl Schwartz at publisher@lansingcitypulse.com.

— **CARRIE SAMPSON**

"Eye Candy of the Week" is our look at some of the nicer properties in Lansing. It rotates with Eyesore of the Week and Eye for Design. If you have a suggestion, please e-mail eye@lansingcitypulse.com or call Berl Schwartz at 999-5061.

# REWIND

## NEWS HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE LAST 7 DAYS



By **KYLE KAMINSKI**

### Eaton County to allow ORVs on backroads

A proposed county ordinance could enable off-road vehicles to legally drive on several dozen Eaton County streets, mostly on backcountry, rural roadways. Still, the idea has generated some criticism from Lansing Mayor Andy Schor, who is worried that the proposal could lead to even more problems with ATVs and dirt bikes illegally cruising through neighborhood streets.

*Read more at [lansingcitypulse.com](https://www.lansingcitypulse.com).*

### Lansing to sell land for 'affordable' housing

A Massachusetts-based real estate development company offered \$200,000 to buy a vacant 2-acre parcel owned by the city on the corner of Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard and Hillsdale Street. Early plans call for a multi-level apartment building with a variety of housing options that have been deemed "affordable" by city officials. Tax incentives will be sought.

*Read more at [lansingcitypulse.com](https://www.lansingcitypulse.com).*

### Developers plan food truck bar in REO Town

Contractors plan to begin renovations this summer on a historic building in REO Town, transforming an aging gas station on Washington Avenue into a full-service bar that may eventually be surrounded by a rotating lineup of food trucks. Pablo's Mexican Restaurant considered opening another location there, but it sold the property to developers for \$185,000. The developers are also seeking a 12-year freeze on property taxes to get the project started.

*Read more at [lansingcitypulse.com](https://www.lansingcitypulse.com).*

### Schor hires new chief of staff

Lansing Mayor Andy Schor hired Jane Bais DiSessa to serve as his chief of staff following the resignation of Deputy Mayor Nicholas Tate. Bais DiSessa brings more than 40 years of local government experience to the job, including most recently having served as a deputy mayor in Pontiac and as a city manager in both Berkley, Michigan, and Brighton, Colorado.

### Judge tosses anti-masker's lawsuit

A Clinton County judge dismissed a lawsuit that was filed last year against Dewitt Public Schools by Adam Holland, the father of two students who decided to sue the district last year over a policy that required students, staff and visitors to wear masks while in school buildings. Holland argued that the superintendent lacked the authority to issue the mandate. District officials, a local judge, and hundreds of years of established case law decided otherwise.

### Rent assistance arrives in Lansing

The City Council voted to accept \$10.3 million in state grant funding that must be spent by April on covering rent for local tenants adversely affected by the pandemic. In partnership with Ingham County, the city partners with other agencies — like Advent House and the Capital Area Housing Partnership — to distribute the grants locally. Visit [cerapp.michigan.gov](https://cerapp.michigan.gov) for details.



### New mascot coming to Okemos

A recommendation en route to trustees at Okemos Public Schools suggests replacing the district's longtime "Chief" and "Chieftain" mascot with a more culturally sensitive replacement of "Wolves." The final decision is set to be made next month.

### Missing teen found dead in river

Authorities have identified a body that was found in the Red Cedar River as Brendan Santo, an 18-year-old Grand Valley State University student who was reported missing after a visit to Michigan State University in October. Cops credited a private investigator with finding his body.



Santo

### General Motors picks Lansing

After weeks of government officials courting corporate executives with various tax incentives, General Motors formally announced plans to build a \$2.6 billion electric vehicle battery plant near the existing Delta Township assembly plant, which is estimated to create about 1,700 new jobs over the next five years as the single largest development project in the city's history.

### Morgan plots return to County Commission

Former Ingham County Commissioner Thomas Morgan is officially staging a comeback tour after filing this week to run for a newly created seat on the Board of Commissioners. Morgan is the only candidate to have filed so far to run for the 7th District, which under recently redrawn district maps includes a chunk of Lansing that was once in the county's 10th District. His campaign has already picked up several key endorsements (including from local politicians and labor unions) and in the last week of December alone raised more than \$27,000 in donations.



Morgan

### Businessman backs off parking lot plans

Following recent neighborhood complaints and some news coverage in City Pulse, Farmington Hills businessman Aaron Williams has tapped the brakes on his plans to build a large parking lot on the edge of the Genesee Neighborhood at 611 N. Butler St. Williams told City Pulse that he's willing to consider giving away the land to be developed into a community garden.

*Read more at [lansingcitypulse.com](https://www.lansingcitypulse.com).*



# Coal ash and transparency

A week ago, City Pulse caught the Lansing Board of Water & Light hiding from the public and its own board of directors that its toxic coal ash ponds outside the Erickson Power Station in Eaton County were contaminating groundwater and possibly polluting local drinking water supplies.

It shouldn't be up to a news outlet to alert the public of an environmental and health threat as serious as this one, and BWL's lack of transparency both before and after the revelation is troubling. One would expect that an agency caught recklessly hiding an environmental mess would quickly admit to wrongdoing and be clear going forward, but that's not how BWL is rolling.

Instead, General Manager Dick Peffley refused to speak with City Pulse ahead of last week's story. His combative PR team gave us a disingenuous explanation for its quiet handling of the matter. And yet again this week, BWL has only doubled down on its petulant form of response.

In an op-ed by Peffley in this week's issue of City Pulse, the agency didn't clear up any confusion, but instead unloaded a litany of half-truths and strawman arguments — not all too uncommon for an entity caught in the wrong. However, the situation's facts are just as indisputable as they are alarming.

The ponds are leaking lithium, boron, TDS, molybdenum and other dangerous contaminants, and the agency knew of it as early as 2020 but opted not to tell anyone. Peffley and BWL currently have no idea how large the pollution plume in the groundwater is, or whether they're poisoning neighboring drinking wells. State and federal regulators found BWL likely in violation of a range of rules and laws, and now they're holding the administration's feet to the fire — requiring it to install monitors to determine the size and scope of the pollution, and ultimately close the ponds.

If BWL poisoned its neighbors' wells, it will have to provide residents with clean drinking water, and it already faces the possibility of fines as it remediates groundwater contamination. Though two municipal wells that are in the plume's path have been decommissioned, there are still dozens of private wells, and no one knows for how long the ponds, built in 1974, have been leaking. It's also possible that pollution reached the water system before those wells closed.

The utility posts groundwater reports to its website, but the general public isn't regularly visiting the BWL's site for contamination updates, and it appears the documents were posted on a page unseen by even its own board members. BWL needs to do a better job with transparency.

When reached by a reporter last week, Board Chairman David Price said that he was told by some-



## The CP Edit

### Opinion

one in BWL's administration that there was no contamination in the groundwater. BWL spokesperson Amy Adamy said that didn't happen. Someone doesn't have his or her story straight. We'd bet it's Adamy, given her response when we asked her if she had a photo of the coal ash ponds: "No, unfortunately I do not." A few minutes later, we found it on Google — in a 2020 BWL report.

Adamy also said the administration didn't alert the board of the issue because BWL hasn't been fined for its violations, "which is the traditional threshold of alerting the policy-making board."

Really? Common sense and decency dictate that matters of public health should always trump "traditional thresholds," and BWL should have alerted the board and public long ago. Health problems linked to the contaminants are alarming. Residents need to know about the risks.

In an op-ed this week, BWL said City Pulse "speculated" that drinking water could be impacted by the pollution. City Pulse didn't speculate. Our reporting simply

repeated the same assertion from EGLE and the EPA: It's possible that drinking water is contaminated. So, as a result BWL has in effect now accused federal and state regulators of "speculating" in the same fashion.

Moreover, BWL says there's no evidence to support that drinking water is contaminated. This is another half-truth. There's no evidence one way or the other because BWL, at least so far, has flatly refused to test wells. BWL also emphasized that its municipal water supply likely isn't impacted, which is true, but it's ignoring that dozens of private wells may still be contaminated.

BWL also touted its long record of action around the ponds dating back to 2009. That doesn't change the current reality: It didn't alert the public of the issue. It still isn't testing neighboring wells. It doesn't know how bad the pollution is, and it likely violated a raft of environmental laws.

Officials there also seem proud of its plans to install four more monitoring wells to determine the plume's size and location. It fails to mention, however, that the state is requiring it to do so.

As the testing and cleanup process plays out, BWL needs to be transparent and clearly communicate. Anything less is unethical and would continue to put the public in danger.

**Have something to say about a local issue or an item that appeared in our pages? Now you have two ways to sound off:**

**1.) Write a letter to the editor.**

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**2.) Write a guest column.** Contact Berl Schwartz for more information: [publisher@lansingcitypulse.com](mailto:publisher@lansingcitypulse.com) or (517) 999-5061. (Please include your name, address and telephone number so we can reach you. Keep letters to 250 words or fewer. City Pulse reserves the right to edit letters and columns.)



# BWL water meets or exceeds drinking water quality standards

By **DICK PEFFLEY**  
**OPINION**

(The writer is general manager of the Lansing Board of Water & Light)

Instead of City Pulse's recent article, "EPA: BWL may be polluting drinking water" (1/18/22), noting BWL's long history of environmentally responsible actions to remove coal ash from our Erickson Power Station, it focused on the U.S. EPA's complex regulatory response to BWL's proposal to comply with rules to remove the coal ash. The reporter also speculated that groundwater contamination might be impacting wells, despite the lack of any evidence to support such a claim.

It is important for City Pulse readers to understand that BWL water continues to meet or exceed all drinking water quality standards established by the EPA and the Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes, and Energy (EGLE). We want to reassure our customers that BWL's water supply, which includes Delta Township and Westside Water, has not been impacted by any contamination at the Erickson site.

A review of our recent history shows that BWL has taken a proactive and responsible approach to coal ash disposal. In 2009, as environmental concerns regarding coal ash impoundments were beginning to be better understood and debated nationwide, BWL commenced a voluntary, four-year project to remove the ash from the 33-acre impoundment at Erickson. This ambitious goal was to place all coal ash generated at Erickson and the now-retired Eckert Power Station into beneficial reuse (for example, as aggregate used to make concrete) or else dispose of the ash off-site in an appropriately designed and permitted landfill.

Between 2009 and 2014, BWL spent \$10 million removing approximately 385,500 tons of ash from Erickson and disposed off-site in a permitted landfill. Waste removal is the gold standard for remediating a disposal site – as opposed to the less costly, more common approach of leaving the material in place and installing an impermeable cap. Again, BWL removed the ash on



Peffley

its own volition without any regulatory mandate.

In 2014-2015, BWL constructed and began operating a new lined ash pond within the footprint of the previous impoundment at Erickson. This coincided with EPA's new Coal Combustion Residuals (CCR) rule, which went into effect in 2015. This rule additionally required in Erickson's case the permanent closure of the ash pond system by October 2023 at the very latest, as well as a host of monitoring and groundwater investigation requirements that are well underway.

BWL's long list of compliance tasks, including a groundwater monitoring program, are described in detail at the BWL website: [lbwl.com/ccr-rule-compliance-data-and-information](http://lbwl.com/ccr-rule-compliance-data-and-information), and includes three monitoring wells installed in 2019 to determine groundwater flow and location of the upper aquifer. In 2020 BWL installed three more wells to help determine whether contamination moved past the waste boundary of its impoundments. Last year BWL installed four more monitoring wells for a total of 10 and developed a groundwater conceptual model to further assist with determining if off-site impacts exist. And BWL will install four more wells this year.

Although there was a gap in implementing BWL's groundwater investigation, once it became evident that some ash was accumulating in the new system, BWL implemented an aggressive schedule that has essentially caught up with the regulatory requirements for groundwater monitoring. BWL has and will continue to work closely with EPA and EGLE to comply with all regulatory requirements applicable to the site.

After 48 years of operations, Erickson Power Station is scheduled to be retired this year at the end of December if EPA agrees to extend its operation after August, which BWL believes is necessary for electric grid reliability. And, by the end of 2023, BWL will remove all coal residues from the Erickson site and permanently close the coal ash ponds.

In the meantime, it is important to understand that BWL water is tested and analyzed 365 days a year to ensure that every drop of water used by our customers is safe.

For questions about BWL's water, our Water Quality Administrator can be reached at (517) 702-7059.

# Diedrich: 'People are tired of the status quo' in politics

By **GRAHAM DIEDRICH**  
**OPINION**

(Graham Diedrich is a Democratic candidate for state representative in Michigan's 75th District, which includes portions of Ingham, Clinton, and Shiawassee County. He lives in Haslett. His website is viewable at [www.grahamdiedrich.com](http://www.grahamdiedrich.com).)

In 2020, we showed up for Democrats. In 2022, it's time for Democrats to show up for us. Our state is facing the preventable impacts of climate change, an affordability and housing crisis, the pandemic, gun violence and racial injustice. But instead of doing their job, corporate politicians in both parties continue to prioritize their own financial interests. Working- and middle-class families continue to suffer as elected officials take more and more money, day in and day out.

But I'm not a politician, far from it. I wasn't raised by a political dynasty, groomed to run for higher office. I'm a community activist, a climate researcher and a rising educator. And I'm running to represent you in the state House because I believe that better is possible, if we demand it. It's time for someone to stand up for us.

Michigan should be a place where people can thrive and build a future. Families who make less than \$65,000 a year deserve tuition-free college and trade school. Our environment and posterity must be prioritized with a bold climate action plan that stops Line 5, implements comprehensive polluter pay legislation, and transitions Michigan to solar and wind energy with the utmost urgency. And it's essential that the systemic root causes of racism and other forms of hatred are identified and rooted out by much needed reforms to our institutions.

I'm committed to delivering on promises unkept by the political establishment in Lansing. When I announced my candidacy back in April last year, special interests woke up. The careful, calculated game of moving positions from one political insider to the next had been disturbed by a first-time candidate with the hopes of delivering for the people, not corpora-



Diedrich

## Why I'm running

City Pulse is running an occasional series of opinion pieces by candidates who have filed for the Legislature in mid-Michigan. Email [publisher@lansingcitypulse.com](mailto:publisher@lansingcitypulse.com) if you wish to participate.

tions. Almost immediately, I was asked to renounce my candidacy. They told me that I was too young, too naive, and incapable of winning. Wait a couple of decades, then you can have your chance. Unfortunately for them, people choose who will represent them.

These conversations always return me to why I'm running in the first place: for real and actionable change. People are tired of the status quo. Tired of having to choose between the lesser of two evils. Tired of voting for the same politicians over and over again.

The next generation of political leaders aren't those who have walked the halls of government for decades. It's people who have walked the corridors of life and it's challenges. Ordinary people who desperately want better for themselves, their children, and their community. We know the issues, we have solutions, so why not us? Let's make a future that we are proud to call our own.

On Aug. 2, I'm asking you to lend me your vote for a chance to build something greater. A society that is equitable and just for all. A system that stands up for you when you stand up for it. A government for the many, not the few.

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# Witwer, Barrett and the politics behind the GM battery plant deal

If the old adage is true and all politics are local, you have to wonder how this week's announcement that General Motors plans to sink \$3.230 billion into the Lansing area is going to work out for two local political figures: state Rep.



KYLE MELINN

POLITICS

Angela Witwer and state Sen. Tom Barrett.

## Opinion

First, let me set the stage.

General Motors, the United States' top auto manufacturer, said it will build a new, \$2.68 billion electric vehicle battery plant near the Lansing Delta Township Assembly Plant. The Lansing Grand River and Delta Township plants also will see \$550 million in planned upgrades.

A total of 1,700 new jobs for the area is being promised.

I'm told this only happened because the Legislature passed and the governor signed before Christmas this new \$1 billion economic development program. General Motors is going to get about two-thirds of this money for what amounts to a \$7 billion investment in Michigan.

The auto industry is moving toward electric vehicles. General Motors wants to get deeper into this market.

Would they have come to the Lansing area without these incentives? Would they have gone to Tennessee or Kentucky like Ford did?

Last year, GM sunk \$2.3 billion into a new battery plant in Spring Hill, Tenn., after all. We're taking General Motors at their word that the answer is yes.

So, let's start with Witwer, the House Democrats' go-to on these economic development projects.

The second-term House member helped sell her caucus on why the \$1 billion Strategic Outreach and Attraction Reserve (SORA) fund was necessary.

Being well connected with both local organized labor and business groups, Witwer worked to get an overwhelming majority of House Democrats to support something progressives decried as a corporate handout.

On Tuesday, Witwer urged the Strategic Fund Board to approve the \$661 million in state incentives that greased the wheels for the \$7 billion GM investments statewide. She shared

the stage with GM chairwoman and CEO Mary Barra and Gov. Gretchen Whitmer.

Witwer was given a chance to even speak at the press conference livestreamed around the world. She and Sen. Curtis Hertel Jr. were the only Democratic legislators given this opportunity.

As she looks at running for a third term, Witwer so far has no Republican opponent. I'm told her support for the GM program apparently chased away one potential candidate.

Gina Johnsen, her 2020 opponent, might return again, but with Republicans having so many open, competitive seats to run in all over the state, the odds of the House GOP sinking any money into a Witwer reelection aren't great.

If one happens to emerge, Witwer will be able to claim that she stood for jobs and economic development for this region.

On the other side of the coin is Sen. Tom Barrett, R-Charlotte, who boldly told the Senate floor last month: "I have voted against more than 99% of corporate subsidy programs during my time in the Legislature."

And then he voted against SORA. To be fair, he wasn't alone. But his conservative Republican colleagues who joined him aren't running for Congress.

Barrett is. Not only is he running for Congress, he's running for Congress against incumbent Elissa Slotkin in the one part of Michigan that is apparently

going to benefit from this investment the most.

In voting no against SORA and the \$1 billion spending bill that followed, Barrett is taking a huge political gamble.

Sure, maybe this project flames out like the much-ballyhooed FoxConn project that flopped in Wisconsin. Maybe there will be big-time buyer's remorse, like Hamtramck and Detroit experienced after they ponied up \$300 million to flatten 1,200 homes in Pole-town back in the 1980s.

Will voters know that for sure in November when they're heading to the polls? Barrett can say he didn't want to sink taxpayers' money into a corporate giveaway.

But Slotkin is going to remind voters that this money isn't going to a nameless, faceless entity.

All that money. All those jobs. They're advertised to be coming here.

(Email Kyle Melinn, of the Capitol news service MIRS at [melinnky@gmail.com](mailto:melinnky@gmail.com). His column appears weekly in City Pulse.)

## CITY OF LANSING SUMMARY OF ADOPTED ORDINANCE # 1297

An Ordinance of the City of Lansing, Michigan, to amend the Code of Ordinances by amending Section 890.01, to reform guidelines for poverty exemptions for real property and to include income and assets of all owners as criteria for eligibility and modify the percentage of relief granted during each year of exemption, consistent with state law.

Effective date: Upon publication

Notice: The full text of this Ordinance is available for review at the City Clerk's Office, 9th Floor, City Hall, Lansing, Michigan. A copy of the full text of this Ordinance may be obtained from the City Clerk's Office, 9th Floor, City Hall, Lansing, Michigan at a fee determined by City Council.

Chris Swope, Lansing City Clerk, MMC/MIPMC  
[www.lansingmi.gov/Clerk](http://www.lansingmi.gov/Clerk)  
[www.facebook.com/LansingClerkSwope](https://www.facebook.com/LansingClerkSwope)

CP#22-018

## PUBLIC NOTICE Step 2 of the 8-Step Process Early Notice and Public Review of a Proposed Activity In the 100-Year Floodplain DATE: January 26, 2022 CITY OF LANSING, MICHIGAN

To: All Interested Agencies, Groups, and Persons

Purpose: Notice and Public Explanation of Proposed Projects

This is to give notice that the City of Lansing under 24 CFR Part 58: Floodplain Management and Wetlands Protection, has conducted an evaluation as required by Executive Order 11988 to determine the potential affect that its activities in the floodplain will have on the human environment for demolition under Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds. Since CDBG funds are being used for this project in the floodplain, the City of Lansing is completing an 8-step Environmental Review process


Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds will be used to remediate asbestos and other environmental hazards as recommended, and demolish the house and garage, including removal of the driveway and approach, and restoration of the curb at 616 S. Mifflin, Lansing, MI which is located in the 100-year floodplain (Zone AE, Flood zone panel # 26065C0132D, effective on August 16, 2011). Grading and seeding will complete the project. There is no proposed development for this project.

There are three primary purposes for this notice. First, people who may be affected by activities in the floodplain and those who have an interest in the protection of the natural environment should be given an opportunity to express their concerns and provide information about these areas. Second, an adequate public notice program can be an important public educational tool. The dissemination of information about floodplain can facilitate and enhance Federal efforts to reduce the risks associated with the occupancy and modification of these special areas. Third, as a matter of fairness, when the Federal government determines it will participate in actions taking place in the floodplain, it must inform those who may be put at greater or continued risk.

A copy of the environmental review is available on the City of Lansing Development Office website: [www.lansingmi.gov/development](http://www.lansingmi.gov/development). Written comments must be received at the City of Lansing during the hours of 8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. on or before February 10, 2022 at the following address: Doris Witherspoon, Senior Planner, Department of Economic Development and Planning, 316 N. Capitol Avenue, Suite D-2, Lansing, MI 48933, Phone: 517-483-4063. Comments may also be submitted via e-mail at [doris.witherspoon@lansingmi.gov](mailto:doris.witherspoon@lansingmi.gov)

CP#22-016

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## ARTS &amp; CULTURE

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# What Wendy Sylvester-Rowan loves about art

## Getting to know East Lansing's arts programming specialist

By CHLOE ALVERSON

Wendy Sylvester-Rowan fell in love with art once she got her hands on a box of 64 Crayola crayons as a child.

"Art is something that connects all of us," Rowan said. "It's something that can provoke so many emotions and unify all of us. I find the arts to be very therapeutic, enlightening. It can be conscious-raising."

She's been putting that into practice as a member of the East Lansing Arts Commission for three years, including as chairwoman starting last year. And since she is also the arts programming specialist for the City of East Lansing, she may be the community's most influential arts leader.

A Pennsylvania native, Sylvester-Rowan — who declined to give her age — was raised outside of Philadelphia, where she grew a passion for both art and engaging with people. She pursued a degree in art education at Miami University in Ohio, where she met her husband, Jake. The pair moved to East Lansing when Jake began a program at Michigan State.

Sylvester-Rowan calls herself a "jack-of-all-trades." In addition to her work for the city, she has been teaching art at Stepping Stones Montessori for over 10 years. Her two college-aged children attended school there.

"This just seemed like the next logical step," Sylvester-Rowan said about her public role. "To be able to be a part of what is happening downtown, in respect to the arts, that's why I joined."

Art, she said, "can be something that really stirs you, which is something that I find has really enriched my life. And if I can help bring that to other people, I think that's a wonderful cause."

East Lansing Mayor Jessy Gregg, an artist herself, said that Sylvester-Rowan has helped reshape the arts com-



Courtesy

East Lansing arts programming specialist Wendy Sylvester-Rowan.

mission. Gregg explained that Sylvester-Rowan encourages the commission to put artists first and embrace the culture of the area.

"Wendy has helped to nudge the board from a realm of 'art appreciation,' where the goal was to curate the city's art collection, into an 'artist forward' direction," Gregg said. "This arts commission is very interested in engaging the creative class in East Lansing, connecting with local artists and figuring out how to help them thrive."

Sylvester-Rowan credits the city's Percent for Art program for the commission's budget. The groundbreaking ordinance, which went into effect in October 2014, requires any development in downtown East Lansing to put 1% of the budget (up to \$25,000) towards the public art fund. A similar effort in Lansing failed when former Mayor Virg Bernero opposed imposing such a tax on developers.

The main role of the arts commission, Sylvester-Rowan said, is working to give out cultural arts grants within the community. Artists apply

for these grants, then the commission decides how to dispense the money most equitably. She noted that the commission often looks to see where the art will have the most impact in the community.

Gregg hopes to see more community engagement with the downtown art experiences, more particularly, in terms of local artists applying for grants.

"I would love to see more people applying for our cultural arts grants, and planning public arts events," she said. "An era of 'Yes! Let's do that!'"

Gregg noted that Sylvester-Rowan often goes the extra mile in her role as arts commission chairwoman, putting in the work to build relationships with other city boards like the Downtown Development Authority. Sylvester-Rowan says her proudest moments come when she and the arts commission collaborate with other area organizations, especially other arts groups.

One collaborative project was the "Daytime. Nighttime. Anytime." project with the city. The arts commission

helped fund and also printed artwork from schools in East Lansing to hang in shops around town in an effort to help the businesses. Nineteen businesses participated, showcasing artwork from students in kindergarten through 12th grade from both public and private schools in the area.

Because of the pandemic and virtual learning, Sylvester-Rowan felt that students haven't had the chance to show off their artwork lately. This project gave them the opportunity to not only show off students' artwork to their classmates and family, but to the public as well.

"It was a phenomenal thing for them to take pride in seeing their artwork in a public place, and it also brought community members downtown to hopefully patronize the businesses," Sylvester-Rowan said. "When you have multiple entities working together for a common goal, to better the community, that really speaks to me."

Another collaborative project Sylvester-Rowan took part in was called "Street Ghosts," by artist Paolo Cirio, which went up last fall. The arts commission worked with the Michigan State University Museum to display images of people captured by Google Street View in the exact location they were taken.

Though some months are slower than others, Sylvester-Rowan said that the commission is looking forward to the nicer weather so that the next project can get started: a mural installation on the side of an Albert Avenue parking garage by Detroit artist Ndubisi Okoye.

As she approaches the end of her tenure as chairwoman, Sylvester-Rowan believes art is the common ground of bringing together a community, especially during a time when people may feel disconnected from each other.

"Art is what makes life exciting. It doesn't have to match your couch."



A promotional banner for the 'Broadway Rocks!' concert. The word 'BROADWAY' is in large, bold, black letters with a white outline and a pink shadow. The word 'ROCKS!' is in large, bold, pink letters with a black shadow. Below 'BROADWAY' is a black arrow pointing right, containing the text 'SAT. FEBRUARY 12 7:30PM' in pink and white. Below 'ROCKS!' is the text 'LANSINGSYMPHONY.ORG' in pink and black. On the right side is a close-up of a silver trumpet. In the top right corner is the 'LSO' logo.

A close-up, soft-focus background of numerous pink roses. The petals are layered and delicate, with varying shades of pink from light blush to deeper rose. The lighting is soft, creating a gentle, romantic atmosphere. The roses are densely packed, filling the entire frame.

# Signs of life – *and art*

# MSU Broad exhibit shows a different side of Frida Kahlo

By LAWRENCE COSENTINO

**L**ight boxes glow like rows of votive candles in a far corner of a first-floor gallery at MSU's Broad Art Museum. On each screen, trembling lines track the heart rhythm, body warmth and breath of one the 20th century's most recognizable figures, Mexican artist Frida Kahlo.

Kahlo's grandniece, artist and photographer Cristina Kahlo, remembers how it felt to view these clinical records, buried in microfilm cabinets in a Mexico City hospital for decades. Etched in light on the walls of the Broad, they blur the line between art and life, just as Frida Kahlo did.

“I wanted viewers to have the same sensation I had, like a darkroom, looking at these old documents,” Cristina Kahlo said.

“Kahlo Without Borders” is not an art show, although it includes five original drawings, one of them a 1932 self-portrait drawn at Henry Ford Hospital in Detroit after the artist suffered a miscarriage..

Most of the exhibit consists of clinical records, letters and photographs documenting Kahlo's 32 surgeries and numerous hospital stays. The clinical records have not been seen publicly until now. The exhibit was co-curated by Broad Museum director Monica Ramirez-Montagut, Cristina Kahlo and Javier Roque Vázquez Juárez, a guest curator.

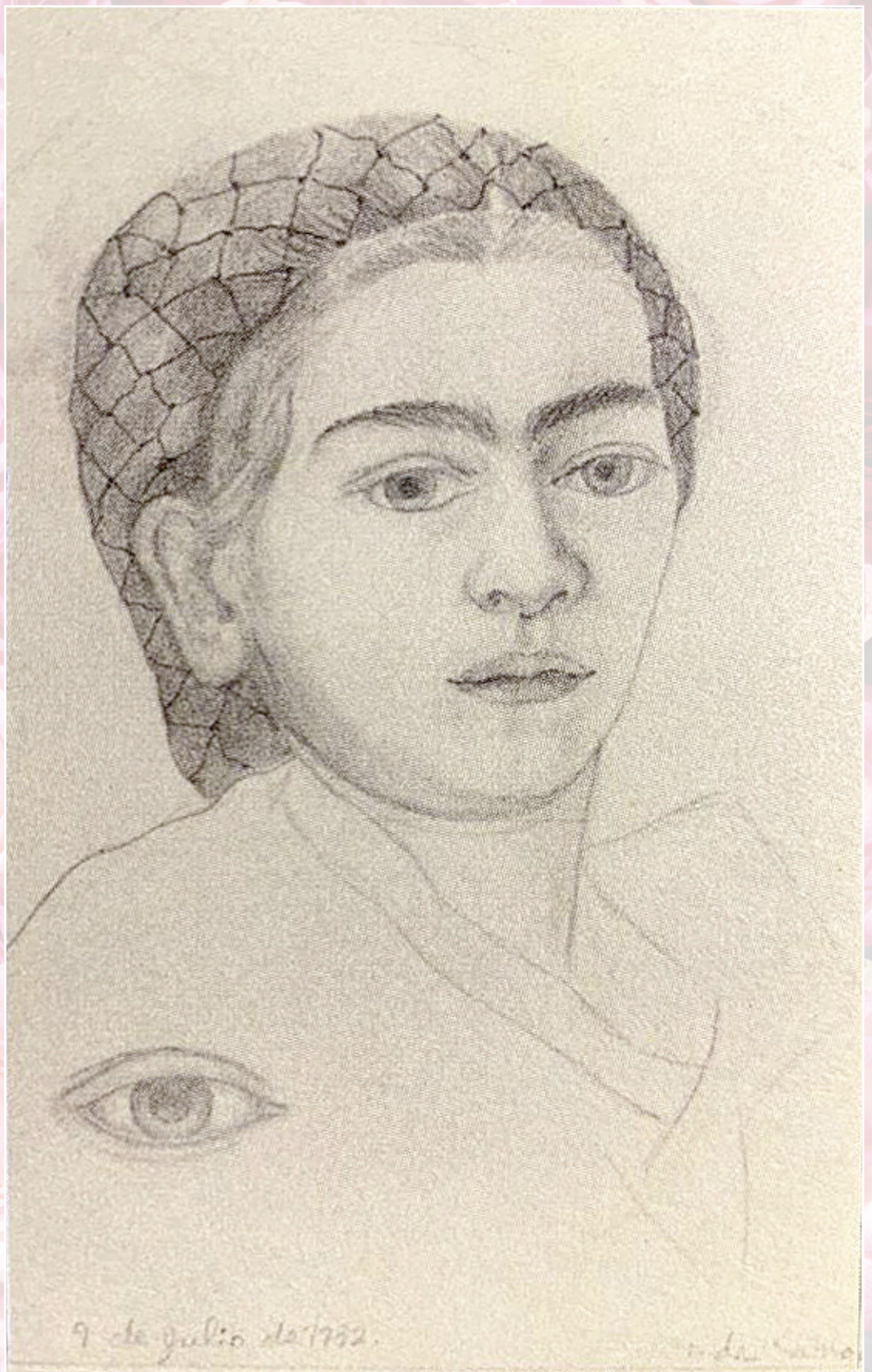
This is not the Frida Kahlo you see on pillows, mugs and handbags, framed by flowers, lace and pithy life lessons.

"We've latched onto the images of Frida at her absolute best," Ramirez-Montagut said. "I think it's time to balance that narrative, because we are all human and we all have our ups and downs."

If that sounds like a depressing afternoon at the museum, you are underestimating Frida Kahlo's indomitable life force. In or out of the hospital, Frida is always Frida. In the photographs and letters on display at the Broad exhibit, we see her blowing kisses to her doctors, turning her hospital room into a studio, smoking with nurses, painting in bed on a special easel, strategizing the fight against fascism in Spain, rocking that famous red lipstick and hair ribbon, and generally Frida-fying the horrible medical hand life dealt her.

"Frida has become a kind of Hollywood icon, an

**'Kahlo Without Borders'**  
Jan. 15-Aug. 7, 2022  
MSU Broad Art Museum



© 2021 Banco de México Diego Rivera Frida Kahlo Museums Trust, Mexico, D.F. / Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York

Frida Kahlo drew this self-portrait July 9, 1932, five days after suffering from a miscarriage, at Detroit's Henry Ford Hospital.

**See Kahlo, Page 14**



# Kahlo

from page 13

image for products,” Ramirez-Montagut said. “The idea of this exhibit was to look at her more as a human, and to see why her work still speaks to us so deeply.”

One of the most arresting images in the exhibit is a photograph by Cristina Kahlo of the prosthesis Frida Kahlo wore when her right leg was amputated in 1953. Fitted with a wedge-heeled, kick-ass crimson boot laced up to the knee, the stylish prosthesis makes your heart sink and rally at the same time.

“The control she had, and how she presented herself, resonates with a lot of us,” Ramirez-Montagut said. “She was unapologetically who she was. She really wanted to milk life for all it was worth while she had the chance.”

## Skeleton key

Why enshrine medical records in an art museum? If there ever was an artist whose medical history provides a skeleton key to her art, it’s Frida Kahlo.

When Cristina Kahlo was a young girl, her father showed her a book of paintings by her great aunt.

“I was scared of them,” Cristina Kahlo recalled. “It was a shock for me. They were strong images, and I didn’t like them.”

Shock and trauma are at the very root of Kahlo’s art. In “The Accident,” a 1926 sketch on view at the Broad, an 18-year-old Frida is flat on her back, covered in bandages. A collision between a tram and a bus in 1925 left her severely injured. In the drawing, the careening vehicles and mangled bodies hover over her prone figure like a persistent nightmare.

Before the accident, Kahlo had only taken a few drawing lessons. She started painting in earnest during her convalescence at Red Cross Hospital.

For the rest of her life, she offered up her pain and suffering on canvas, in part realistic, part symbolic language peculiar to herself.

The more Cristina Kahlo learned about her great aunt’s life, the more she learned about how to decipher the “scary” images that once shocked her.

“You can’t separate her art and her life,” Kahlo said. “They go together.”

In Kahlo’s famous 1944 painting “The Broken Column,” the artist’s exposed spine is depicted as a cracking architectural column. You can see right through her torso, which is barely held together by metal stays. A photograph by Cristina Kahlo at the Broad shows one of the painful corsets Kahlo had to wear between surgeries.

“She has done something I cannot find in any other artist, both as a person as an artist,” Kahlo said. “She was a pioneer in the use of personal image, of her body, in her art.”

In the 1932 painting “Henry Ford Hospital,” also known as “The Flying Bed,” the artist lies naked on a bloodstained hospital bed after suffering a miscarriage. The bed hovers in front of an industrial Detroit skyline. Six symbolic objects, including a fetus and a snail, are tethered to her navel.

“Henry Ford Hospital” is one of 25 Kahlo works housed in Mexico City’s Dolores Olmedo Museum, where Monica Ramirez-Montagut first encountered Frida Kahlo’s art as young girl. Growing up in Mexico City, Ramirez-Montagut spent many long days soaking up the city’s ancient and modern wonders.

“That’s what we did on weekends all the time — we went to museums,” she said. “That’s why I work in museums now.”

At the Olmedo Museum, Ramirez-Montagut absorbed Kahlo’s boldly direct yet mysterious visual language. The museum is also home to over 140 works by Kahlo’s famous husband, muralist Diego Rivera.

“I saw these beautiful self-portraits by Frida,” Ramirez-Montagut recalled. “I remember one in particular, of Frida, thinking about Diego, with Diego painted on her forehead. I remember having a moment with that painting. You can see that she’s looking inward, and I was fascinated at how you can show that with a painting.”

## National treasures

The seeds for the Broad exhibit were sown a few years ago, in Mexico City, when Cristina Kahlo chanced to meet Mary Carmen Amigo, a doctor at the Centro Médico ABC, where Frida Kahlo stayed many times.

To Kahlo’s surprise, Dr. Amigo told her Frida’s clinical files were still at the hospital, in storage. They set a date for Kahlo to visit the hospital and photograph the files.

“It was an amazing day,” Kahlo said. “The people who worked there were really touched.

They wanted to see what they had kept for so many years. They hugged me, and a woman was crying because she was such a Frida fan.”

She came back a few days later, with a professional camera and a tripod, to capture the images seen at the Broad exhibit.

“It was really emotional for me to see these records, because they made her life so real, with the writing of the doctors and nurses,” she said.

Some months later, Kahlo told Ramirez-Montagut she was looking for a way to present the files to the public.

Ramirez-Montagut’s early encounters with Kahlo’s art were never far from her mind as she went on to become an architect, curator and museum director.

“It’s always been my dream to do an exhibition on Frida Kahlo,” she said.

But that’s a tall order, even for the MSU Broad Museum’s third director in its 10-year history. Frida Kahlo’s works are considered national treasures in Mexico. They are in continuous demand from museums around the world and command loan fees that make them prohibitive to all but the biggest institutions.

“The level of security measures we had to comply with to bring five original works was considerable,” Ramirez-Montagut said. A courier had to accompany the drawings at all times, and the gallery’s temperature and humidity are kept under strict control. The Broad even had to obtain the Mexican government’s approval for City Pulse to reproduce Kahlo’s Henry Ford Hospital self-portrait on these pages.

It so happens that the owner of the drawings in the Broad exhibit is Juan Coronel Rivera, grandson of Diego Rivera — and a friend of Cristina Kahlo since they were in middle school. The two even ran a gallery together.

“That’s funny, because at some point, Frida’s family and Diego’s family did not get along, but Cristina and Juan are tight friends,” Ramirez-Montagut said.

It was a coup for the Broad to borrow the drawings, but they are not showstoppers. They are there to serve a specific purpose.

“While a survey of Frida’s work would be impossible for us to pull off, at least for now, we can certainly go in depth into one aspect and further the scholarship on Frida,” Ramirez-Montagut said.

The exhibit stretches beyond dry clinical records to connect the dots between Frida Kahlo’s life and art in surprising ways. A series of photographs by Cristina Kahlo of Frida Kahlo’s hospital gowns, daubed with paint, double as historical documents and works of art in themselves.

“You can match the photographs with her paintings and the gowns with the colors,” Cristina Kahlo said.

Kahlo’s doctors and nurses are a strong presence throughout the exhibit.

“You can read about the doctors in Frida Kahlo’s life, but you see very few images of them,” Cristina Kahlo said. “If you’ve had surgery in your life, you know the most important people is your doctor. You take the hand of the doctor and say, ‘My life is in your hands.’”

In a 1951 painting, “Self-portrait with Dr. Juan Farill,” Kahlo is shown in a wheelchair, working on a portrait of her doctor, using her own heart as a palette. A photograph at the Broad shows her working on the painting.

There is also a postcard from New York, dated Nov. 2, 1940, addressed to her “querido doctorcito” (“dear little doctor”) Leo Eloesser, with a bold, lipstick kiss.

In a letter to Dr. Eloesser in June 1944, she describes the “corset” doctors ordered for her as “hell to wear.”

See Kahlo, Page 15



Lawrence Cosentino/City Pulse

(Above) A partition at the MSU Broad’s “Kahlo Without Borders” exhibit shows Kahlo resting, cigarette in hand, at Mexico City’s ABC Hospital in 1953 after the amputation of her right leg.

# Kahlo

from page 14

“I write to you from my bed because I am still ‘screwed up’ in the spine,” Kahlo writes. “I am desperate because it seems nothing makes my spine condition better.” She asks the traveling Dr. Eloesser to him to visit her and “explain to me what type of bullshit I have and alleviate it, or if this is going to do me away.”

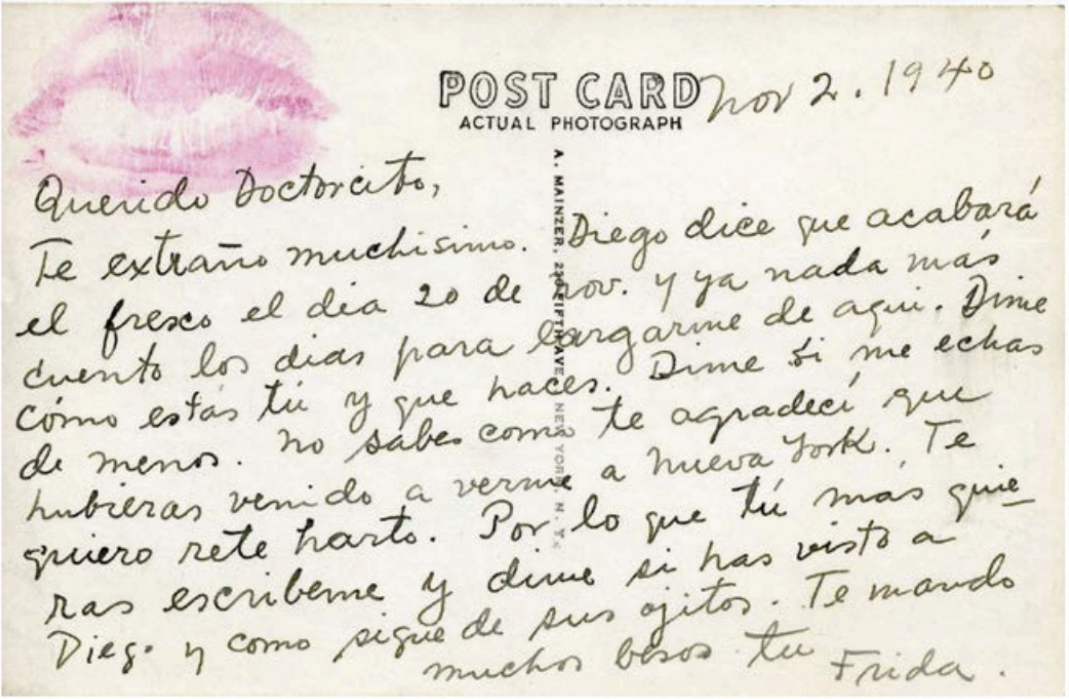
## Fire and frailty

Despite her repeated, prolonged hospital stays, a series of striking photos at the Broad exhibit show Frida Kahlo carrying on with her vibrant life and art, as only she could.

“She personalized her hospital room surroundings with paints, pencils, books and, always, her cigarettes,” Cristina Kahlo said.

The photos also reveal quaint bygone medical practices like operating rooms with open windows.

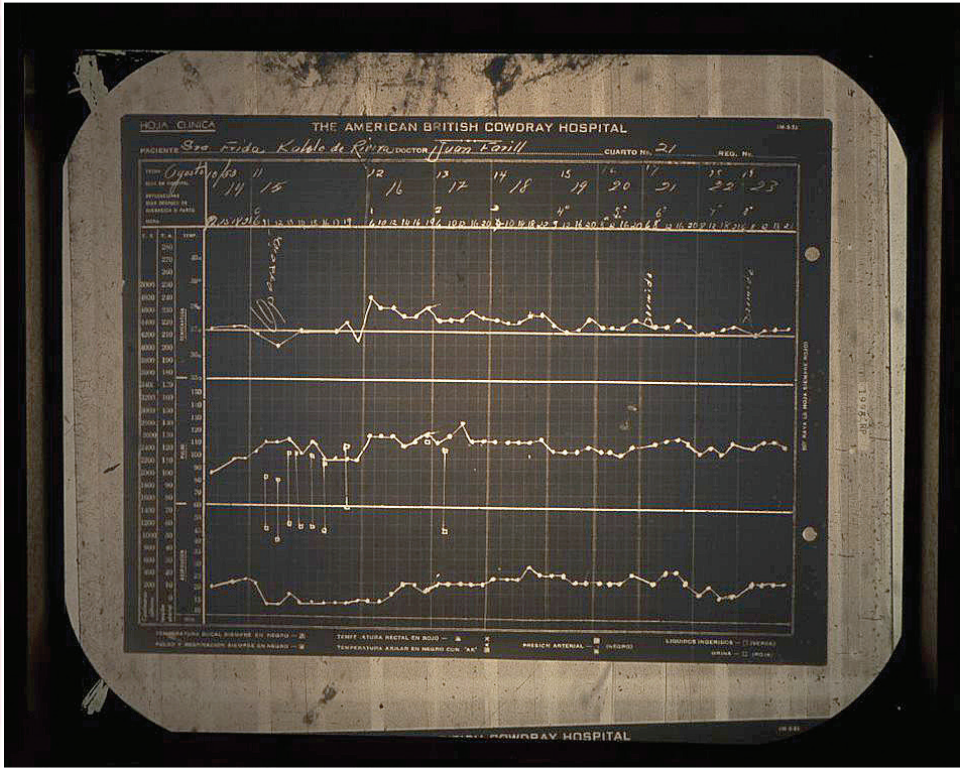
“That’s another interesting part of this story



Courtesy MSU Broad Art Museum

Frida Kahlo often expressed affection and gratitude to her doctors in letters such as this postcard from New York, dated Nov. 2, 1940, addressed to her “querido doctorcito” (“dear little doctor”) Leo Eloesser.

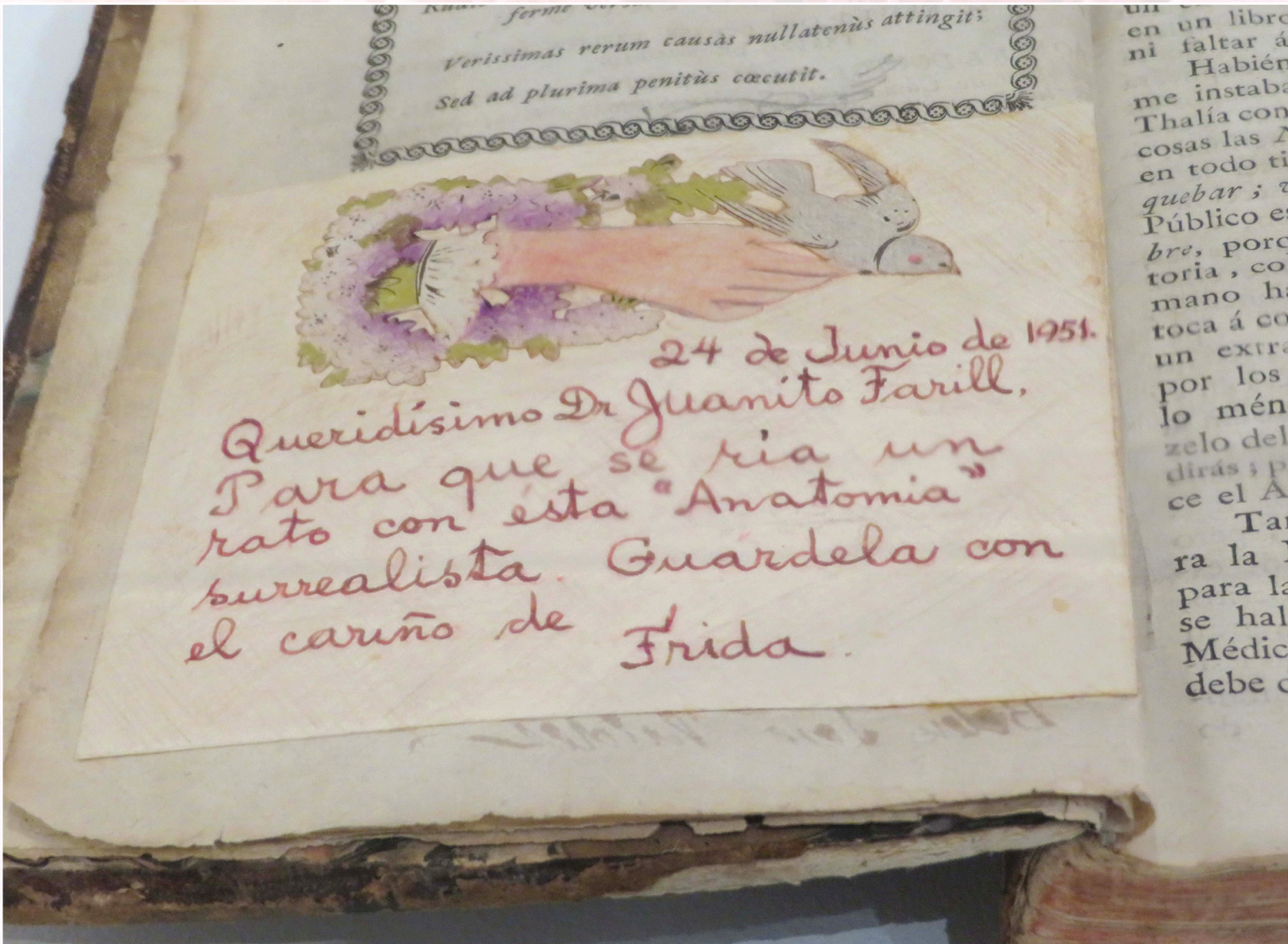
See Kahlo, Page 16



Courtesy of the artist and Archivo Historico Centro Medico ABC.

Light boxes display clinical records photographed by Cristina Kahlo, grandniece of Frida Kahlo and co-curator of the Broad Museum exhibit.





A grateful Frida Kahlo sent a 1788 anatomy book to her doctor, Juan Farill, with a personally addressed card.

Lawrence Cosentino/City Pulse

# Kahlo

from page 15

— the story of medicine,” Cristina Kahlo said. “She’s lying on the bed after surgery, smoking with a nurse.”

The letters on view at the exhibit open a fascinating window into the everyday concerns, and larger causes, that filled Kahlo’s and Rivera’s lives.

A letter to Dr. Leo Eloesser dated January 5, 1937, finds Kahlo in the hospital, not for her own sake, but to support Rivera, who was fighting a kidney inflammation. Rivera’s illness came at a bad time, just after he and Kahlo had persuaded the Mexican government to let them host Soviet revolutionary leader Leon Trotsky and his wife, Natalya Sedova, at their home in Mexico City. (Kahlo ended up meeting their famous guests at the dock by herself; later that year, she would have an affair with Trotsky.)

In the letter, Kahlo brushes her own concerns aside to thank Eloesser for his contributions to Spanish anti-Fascists and asks him to persuade his friends to help the cause. “I wish I could write you a longer letter, sharing personal things about me and Diego, but you can’t imagine how little time I have,” she writes. “I promise that as soon as I can, and when things calm down, I will write a letter the size of The New York Times.”

For a horrifying glimpse at the suffering Kahlo endured in later life, visitors to the Broad exhibit can read a letter in the ornate, old-school hand of Kahlo’s mother, Matilde, addressed to Dr. Eloesser in April 1950.

After more than a week of daily fevers, vomiting and pain in the spine, Matilde noticed a foul smell coming from Frida’s back.

“They fixated her vertebrae with bones from who-knows-who, and the first 11 days were horrendous,” she writes. The doctors found an infected abscess and operated again, setting off another round of pain, fever and intestinal paralysis. After the surgery, the stitches turned black, Matilde reported a “dead dog smell” and told Eloesser more surgery might be

needed. “I think the bone did not fix to the vertebrae and everything is infected,” she laments. “Seeing her suffer like this, I wish I could give her my life.”

The clinical eye of “Kahlo Without Borders” might strike some visitors as morbid and voyeuristic, if any artist but Frida Kahlo was the subject. But with Kahlo at the center of attention, every new piece of information seems to confirm, or illuminate, the artist’s own lifelong commitment to frank self-revelation.

A stunning photograph, blown up to wall size, gives visitors the feeling of dropping in on a privileged, intimate moment in 1953, as Kahlo recovers from the amputation of her leg.

“She brought a photographer to the hospital to take this photograph, which we have in the exhibition, of Frida looking frail and deteriorating,” Ramirez-Montagut said.

Her new prosthesis, complete with boot, is clearly visible. As always, Kahlo exudes off-the-chart life force, but there is a haunted look on her face betrays the deep depression she would suffer at this time in her life.

“This is Frida, documenting herself, at her best and at her worst,” Ramirez-Montagut said.

## Beyond FridaFest

“I’ve been thinking a lot about why Frida Kahlo gets into the heart of the people,” Cristina Kahlo said. “It’s really interesting.”

It’s strange turn of events, to say the least, that the artist whose bloody self-portraits scared Cristina Kahlo as a little girl — the Communist diehard who wooed Trotsky and left a portrait of Joseph Stalin unfinished at her death — went on in the 21st century to become the ubiquitous face on coffee mugs, flip-flops and handbags, a U.S. postage stamp and the subject of several children’s books, like “Frida Kahlo and her Animalitos.”

“Now you see lots of little girls who love Frida Kahlo,” Cristina Kahlo marveled. “There is a FridaFest in Edinburg, Texas, where you find little girls and old women dressed up as Frida Kahlo.”

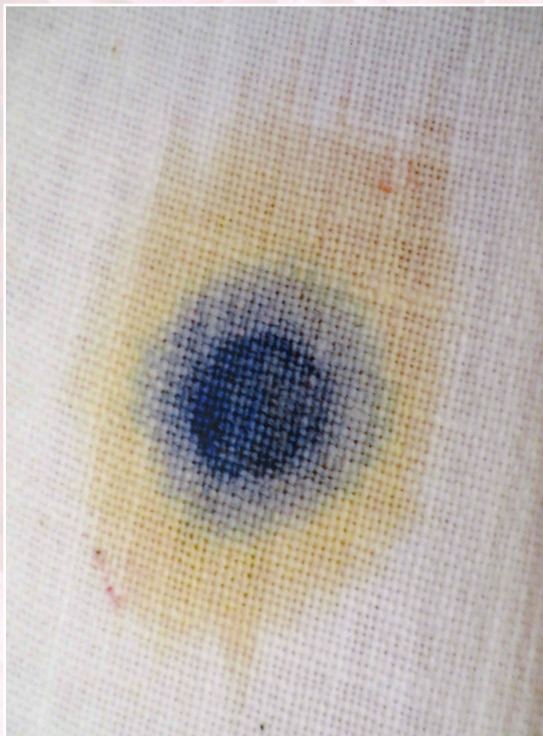
Uncompromising and “scary” as she might be, her life and art leave many diverse groups of people many different entry points. A real-life lesson in how to flourish under conditions of isolation, illness and

loss may not come amiss in 2022.

“Two years into the pandemic, it’s important to recognize that Frida resorted to art, not only for self-expression, but for survival,” Ramirez-Montagut said. “That’s what she did in the hours and hours and hours she spent in the hospital.”

Cristina Kahlo boiled the enduring allure of Frida Kahlo down to a simple idea.

“If you show your own life to someone else, they will become involved,” she said. “If she’s angry with Diego Rivera, or when she’s having surgery, or whatever it is, she’s telling you parts of her life. If you are not faithful to your husband, or if your husband has been unfaithful to you, you will relate to her. It’s like a friend. If I start to talk to you about my personal life, you will feel more involved with me, and talk to me about your life.”



Lawrence Cosentino/City Pulse

Detail from “Rays, Suns and Hidden Rhythms,” Cristina Kahlo’s photographic study of paint marks left on Frida Kahlo’s hospital gown.



# Erin Bartels wades through deep memories and lost friendships

By **BILL CASTANIER**

Lansing resident Erin Bartels' new book, "The Girl Who Could Breathe Underwater," is part mystery, part romance and part coming-of-age story. The novel revolves around a young author who goes up north in Michigan to finish her second novel. If it sounds formulaic and simple, it isn't.

Our protagonist, Kendra Brennan, has authored a successful first novel, a thinly veiled memoir she titled "The Summer." Brennan develops the worst case of writer's block as she tries to write her follow-up book, and an impending deadline has her on edge.

Following the publication of her first novel, Brennan received a letter from a reader signed "Sincerely, A Disappointed Reader."

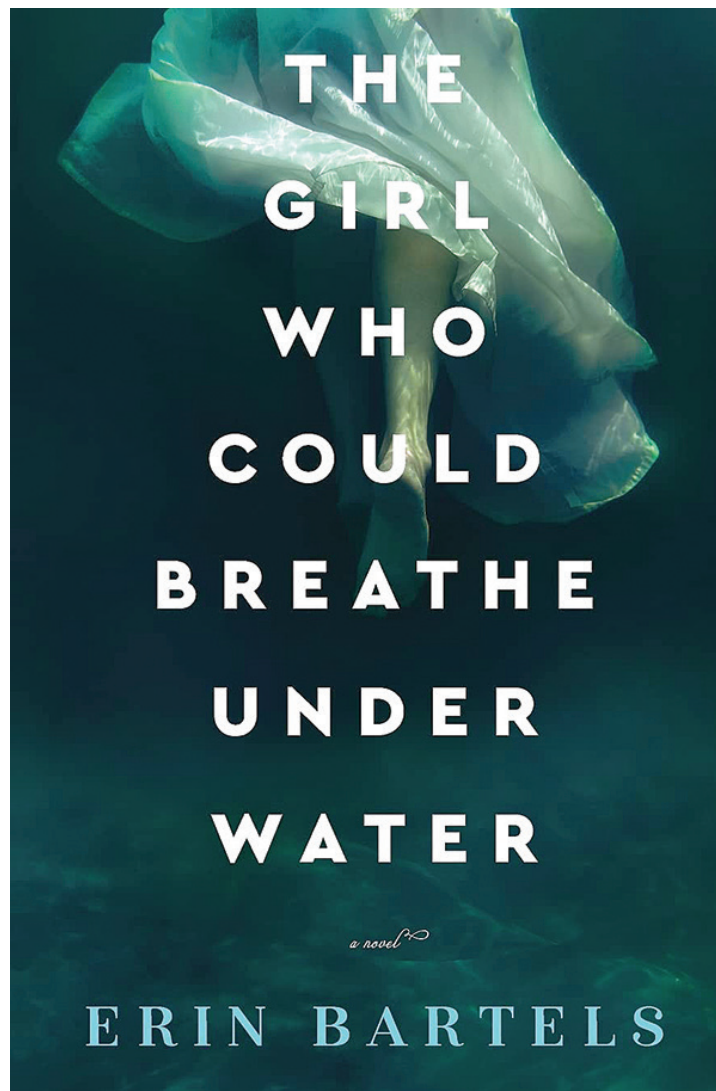
The letter is personal, and most likely from someone who knows a lot about the fictionalized summer that forms the plot of her first book. Kendra becomes so obsessed with who may have written the letter that it has kept her from writing her second novel. With the deadline around the corner, Kendra decides to spend the summer at her grandfather's cabin in Northern Michigan, which served as the setting for her first book and where the likely letter writer resides.

It's there on Hidden Lake she sets out to finish her novel and discover who wrote the letter and why. Without giving away any of the plot threads, let's just say she finds out more than she might have reckoned.

As she moves into the cottage, Kendra is looking forward to seeing old friends — especially Cami, her closest childhood friend from whom she has lost touch. She also hopes Cami's dad, Robert, her mentor and neighbor on Hidden Lake, might help her kickstart her writing. He's a successful writer and a father figure for Kendra, whose actual father abandoned the family. Her mother, Jackie, has kept the identity of her father secret.

Soon after moving into the cottage, Kendra is surprised when an interpreter, Andreas, who has been hired to translate her first book into German, shows up at the cottage. Although totally unexpected, he soon becomes part of the complicated round of summer activities and Kendra's writing. One person Kendra's dreading to see is Tyler, Cami's older brother.

I spoke to Bartels at her Lansing home, where she works remotely for Revel, a division of Baker Publishing



Group in Grand Rapids, as a copywriter. She's an expert on writing those little descriptions that appear on the back of a book.

"The book is very personal to me," she said. "I also have never had writer's block."

That statement is backed up by the four novels she has published since 2019.

Bartels uses an interesting technique in various parts of her book. She begins a "conversation" between Kendra and her lost friend Cami, from whom no one has seen or heard from in quite some time. The technique allows Bartels to fill in background and to explore her feelings.

"I originally wrote in the third person, but it wasn't there," she said.

As the summer progresses, Kendra has not put one word on the page; is uptight about the return of

Tyler; and might be developing a crush on her German interpreter.

In her new book, Bartels continues themes she has used in her previous books — especially the importance of redemption and forgiveness. She said the fictionalized book "The Summer" and "The Girl Who Could Breathe Underwater" draw heavily from the

themes in her first novel, which she never published.

"The Girl Who Could Breathe Underwater" explores deep and sometimes false memories, and what truth is.

"There are no heroes and no villains," Bartels said.

Readers may dispute that observation as they get more deeply into the novel. Bartels also wants readers to think about friendship and how we lose it.

"Until we lose our friends, we don't remember how much they meant to us," she said.

In a quick summary of her book, Bartels describes it this way: "Something bad happened, and no one gets revenge or justice."

Michiganders will recognize and appreciate Bartels' apt description of cottage life, including collecting unusual stones on the beach and the omnipresent board games tucked away on shelves awaiting a rainy day.

"I have a pile of stones right next to me," she said. "Life Up North is kind of timeless, with furniture a couple decades old."

Bartels has already turned in the manuscript for her next novel, which is set in East Lansing and revolves around music of the '90s with a good look at the Detroit roots of rock 'n' roll.

Readers, especially those who like the successful "friendship fiction" genre, won't be disappointed in Bartels' newest book. Just try not to giveaway any of the plot lines, and don't read the author notes before wading into Bartels' new book.

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# Scooperman, blueberry waffles, weed soda and terpenes

Four dank cannabis products now available in Greater Lansing

By KYLE KAMINSKI

There's certainly no shortage of dank cannabis products on the shelves at pot shops across Greater Lansing this year. And with so many new strains, edibles and concentrates constantly hitting the market this month, I've truly struggled to find enough time to write about them all. I can't even finish a bag of weed nowadays without spotting something else out there worth trying.

So, in what will be a recurring feature, I present this month's Kief Tray — a broad assortment of some dank marijuana products that I just didn't have time to feature on their own this month.



**Glorious Cannabis Co. — Scooperman (\$45/3.5g)**  
**Terpenes: Limonene; Linalool; Ocimene**

Lake Orion-based Glorious Cannabis Co. is having a banner year for pot. After releasing a decadent new lineup of THC-infused gummies last month, the company recently partnered with the cultivation wizards at Superior Flowers to roll out a wide variety of flower and concentrates that are available now at several local retailers such as Bazonzoes, Jars and Gage Cannabis Co.

That partnership includes a variety of new strains, but among the tastiest was Scooperman — a crossbreed between Gelato 41 and Purple Pebbles that tastes eerily like superman ice cream.

Gelato 41 is known for potent and relaxing body high and a sweet, earthy aroma. The Purple Pebbles adds a sweet and fruity kick. Together, they've created a creamy, dessert-like strain with strong notes of vanilla and pine — and just the right amount of skunky, spicy goodness.

**Lansterdam**  
**in Review:**  
January Kief Tray



**Gage Cannabis Co. — Blueberry Cream Waffle (\$35/1g)**

The folks over at Gage Cannabis Co. made a pretty bold claim this month, labeling their newly released distillate vaporizer cartridges as the “best vape carts in Michigan.” And as someone who has sampled dozens of different brands over the years, I just had to put them to the test.

These one-gram cartridges are all crafted using own Gage's in-house flower strains — including Cake Batter, Funfetti Cake, Runtz, Sweet Tartz, Banana Bread, Gelato Driver, Strawberry Gelato, Grease Monkey, Ether OG, Fatso OG and Cookies & Cream. I tried a few of them. My personal favorite — by far — was the indica-leaning hybrid variety of Blueberry Cream Waffle.

Are they the best vaporizer cartridges available in Michigan? No. Distillate products simply don't compete with some of the pricier, terpene-filled live rosin carts on pot shop shelves nowadays. Will they still get the job done? Absolutely. They also tasted exceptional. And with Gage's 4/\$100 deal, it's pretty hard to find a better bang for your buck on the recreational market today.

**Happi — Sparkling THC Water (\$19/4 pack)**

This next product is a real game changer for the cannabis industry. Happi claims to have created the first THC-infused beverage to hit the recreational marijuana market in Michigan — and it's available here in East Lansing at Skymint's newest local location on Coolidge Road.



RASPBERRY HONEYSUCKLE

LEMON ELDERFLOWER

POMEGRANATE HIBISCUS

Each 8.4 oz can includes the tiniest microdose of 2.5 mg of THC and is marketed as an alternative to alcohol — a beverage worth drinking in sessions of four or five cans that will work to gradually get you ripped over the course of an evening. As a seasoned toker, these sparkling waters didn't exactly get me high. I might've felt a tingle or two after guzzling down four cans on Saturday evening, but it's not enough to write home about.

The all-natural ingredients comprising the raspberry honeysuckle and lemon elderflower flavors, however, were quite tasty. And amateurs can certainly still get high from 10 mg of THC. I bought a four-pack for a close family member who hasn't smoked pot in year, who got totally baked.

And if you're celebrating Dry January, this might be a good excuse to indulge in something else.



**Grow Haven — Ethos Cookies (\$45/3.5g)**

Grow Haven is a relatively new cannabis cultivation company based in Paw Paw, but its products are available at Arcanna in Ionia — which offers free delivery across Greater Lansing. And its Ethos Cookies strain is among the best weed I've ever had the privilege of smoking.

CEO Jeremy Neilitz truly understands that terpene profiles play a

much more important role than THC content in determining the overall potency and resulting high of any given strain. That's why his company goes out of its way to test the terpene profiles of every harvest.

Ethos Cookies tests at about 23% THC, but it's the 2.8% terpene content that really makes it shine — including a potent blend of limonene, trans-caryophyllene and ocimene. The buds were huge and absolutely caked with yellow-tinted trichomes. Its terpene blend helped to create a peppery flavor profile with bright citrus notes and just a light touch of freshly mowed grass.

It was the potent effects, however, that stunned me. One joint had me feeling exceptionally chatty and giggly, a euphoric sort of marijuana-induced daze that I haven't felt in several years.

Neilitz also said Ethos Cookies is the only strain that helps with his chronic back pain — so those looking for pain relief might also find some added benefits from this particular strain.

*Kyle Kaminski is City Pulse's managing editor and a cannabis enthusiast who has been smoking marijuana just about every day for the last decade. Almost weekly, Kaminski samples some of the best cannabis products available in Greater Lansing, gets real high and writes about them.*

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# *Favorite Things* Cameron Earley and his rubber rat toy

*Cameron Earley is a line cook with Ruckus Ramen inside The Avenue Café and owns a consignment shop called Cult of Death. Earley is an avid collector of rare vintage toys, and his favorite thing is a custom piece he ordered from toy sculptor Zac Amendolia.*

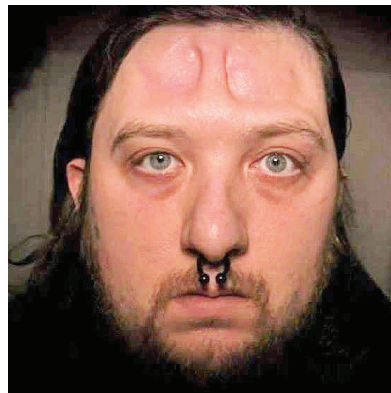
My favorite thing is a custom-made toy by an Instagram creator named Zac Amendolia. His company is called Greasy Creeps and he makes weird, vintage-inspired rubber toys and I'm super into the old Finger Monster toys; Madballs — all the weird '80s gross stuff. He recreates them with his own style, and this is the first one I've purchased from him. I love it.

I don't even know if I can say how exactly I discovered Amendolia. Somebody I follow must have shared a picture of one of his toys. Who knows? I just picked up on him somewhere out there on the Internet.

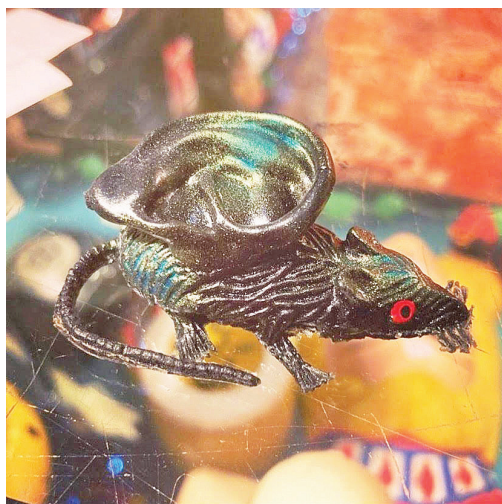
There's a small subculture of people that have same obsession with these gross '80s toys. We're all super-collectors and we're always trying to trade with each other on Instagram. Something about the style really appeals to me; maybe it's my love for Halloween.

The online world of toy trading is huge, especially for the classic '80s stuff like Madballs. There's a lot of people with Instagram stores and they'll do live auctions. There's even a huge niche for it in Lansing. Tesco Vee hosts a regular collectible toy show, and it almost always draws in people that into Universal monsters, or any other kind of '80s monster stuff.

For years, I was super into



collecting vintage toys. It got to the point where my shelves were overflowing. I moved the toys from shelves into tubs and then the tubs started overflowing. Then I decided to start a little



shop and sell what I could. It's super small and it's located in the basement of Thrift Witch in Old Town. It's a very small room, but my wife and I pack it with hand-picked stuff. Maybe we don't do the best in sales, but it's something I am going to keep doing. Hopefully I can make some money from it someday.

*Interview edited and condensed by Skyler Ashley. If you have a suggestion for Favorite Things, please email Skyler@Lansingcitypulse.com*

## Music venue to breathe new life downtown at former gay club

Developers spending  
\$900,000 for  
6,000-square-foot site

By CHLOE ALVERSON

A new music venue is coming to downtown Lansing in a 100-year-old building at 224 S. Washington Square. The entire project, including the purchase and renovation, is estimated to cost just over \$900,000.

RBM Properties proposed the renovation to the building. The Lansing Economic Development Partnership — LEAP — approved a \$136,500 loan for the project. Kevin Meyer, a managing member of the company, is now co-owners of the building with Scott Bell. Both Meyer and Bell work as promoters for music festivals, such as Common Ground and Breakaway.

The city and state still need to approve a liquor license.

The building is the former home of a hookah lounge and was once a popular

club spot. Club Paradise, which later became Club X-Cel, was a well-known gay bar during the 1990s. X-Cel nightclub was described on a Lansing bars website as “young” and “fun,” offering “an atmosphere much closer to Chicago

than to Lansing with a one-of-a-kind design.” The site was also a hip-hop venue remembered for multiple confrontations with the police.

The city assessor's website lists a sale of the property Dec. 30, 2021. It says 1247 Center St. LLC sold the property to RBM Properties, LLC, for \$300,000. It was owned by Tom Donall, who owns Spiral Dance Club, 1247 Center St.

The 6,000-square-foot venue would fill a niche for a medium-sized venue, which are in short supply locally. It will accommodate general admission shows of 700 to 800 people, and no longer function as a nightclub, Bell confirmed.

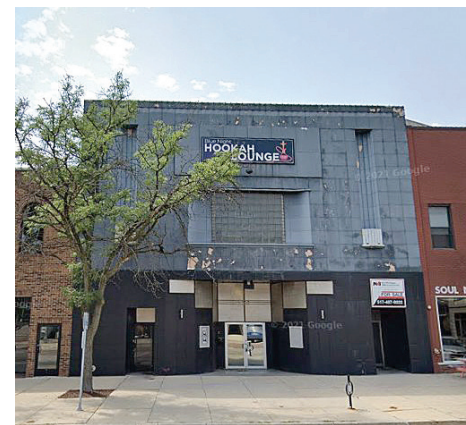
All genres of music would be welcome. Smaller events like weddings can utilize the space as well, as it will be available for rent.

The new owners plan to host more than 100 events every year, estimating that the venue will have an “impact at \$10 million annually,” as reported by Fox 47.

In a phone call with City Pulse, Bell confirmed

the already public information.

“Other than the publicly available quotes and data, we don't have anything to add,” said Bell.



Courtesy

Developers plan to turn a vacant former gay club and hookah lounge at 224 S. Washington Square in downtown Lansing into a music venue that can accommodate 800 people.

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Art by Nevin Speerbrecker



# Sarab Kamoo portays the lives of nine women

By DAVID WINKELSTERN

"It is an honor to tell the stories of these women," Sarab Kamoo said. "They have lived with me for years and I am sure they will continue to do so

## "9 Parts of Desire"

Tickets are available at [tickets.williamstontheatre.org](https://tickets.williamstontheatre.org) Or the Box Office (517) 655-7469 Tuesday to Friday, Noon to 6 p.m. Proof of full vaccination and photo ID is required for admittance. Masks are required in the theater.

years from now."

In "9 Parts of Desire," Kamoo portrays nine Iraqi females impacted by both Gulf Wars and

the occupation that followed. The Heather Raffo play begins a five-week run at Williamston Theatre starting

Jan. 27.

"I saw Heather Raffo perform it in Washington DC in 2006 and I was blown away by her performance," Kamoo said. "Since that time, I am honored to say, she has remained a dear and close friend."

Kamoo did the one-woman show first in 2007 at the Dearborn Center for Performing Arts. She performed "9 Parts of Desire" the same year at Detroit's Boll Theatre and in 2008 at the Performance Network in Ann Arbor.

Raffo was in the audience for the 2008 show. "Thank goodness I didn't know beforehand that she was there," Kamoo said. "I would have been

incredibly intimidated."

"After the show, she was so supportive and loving and continues to this day," Kamoo said. "She is family to me."

Raffo spent a decade researching and writing the play inspired by a trip to Baghdad. As a half-Iraqi, she was able to get close to and bond deeply with her subjects.

Raffo works continuously to keep her script current and kept regular contact with Kamoo during rehearsals. "I can reach out and ask her questions or clarifications as needed," she said.

"She has changed one of the characters pretty significantly and our production will be the first time the show will be performed with the new material," Kamoo said.

The characters in the 90-minute play include doctors, a sexy painter, a radical communist, exiles, wives and lovers. The intimate play reveals what it means to be woman or girl in a country overshadowed by war.

Kamoo relates to the child the most. "I feel so connected to the Iraqi girl," she said. "She is representative of the innocence of children no matter what part of the world they live in."

"Nana, the street seller, was the most challenging because she is so dramatically different from me," Kamoo said. "However, she is probably the most fun to play."

To prepare for nine very different roles, Kamoo starts with establishing the walk, hand gestures and posture of each character. For each monologue, she determines whom they are talking to and what they want or need.

Kamoo has personal connections to the play. "I am 100% Chaldean — Christian people from Iraq," she said. Her parents, grandparents, aunts, uncles, and cousins emigrated from Iraq to the US in 1966.

During the Persian Gulf War, Kamoo was in college. "My friends and I drove to Washington, D.C., to march in protest," she said. "During the second Gulf War, I have memories of crying with my grandparents and my dad, watching news of the war," Kamoo said. "It was really difficult to watch."

Despite being born in the United States, she has faced bothersome attitudes. "I have experienced people making stereotypical and condescending comments regarding my heritage,"



Peter Smith

Sarab Kamoo in a production of "9 Parts of Desire" at the Performance Network.

Kamoo said.

She loves being able to work with the Williamston staff — and her co-director, Ed Nahhat. "They have established such a safe and welcoming environment to create and perform," Kamoo said.

She last appeared at Williamston in "Silent Sky," "Boom" and "Panache." Other theater credits include "Sherlock Holmes and the Adventure of the Elusive Ear," "Smart Love," and "The Winner Is" at the Purple Rose Theatre — where Kamoo is a resident artist.

Besides her numerous theatrical roles, she has an impressive list of film and TV appearances. That includes the "Won't Back Down" and "Block Party" movies, and spots on "Chicago Fire" and "Chicago PD." Kamoo is also a part-time school social worker in the Rochester School District.

"I was drawn to this play especially being of Iraqi descent and having the opportunity and honor to share these women's stories," Kamoo said. "I'm very proud of my heritage and I am grateful to be able to bring some of it to light though these words and this play."



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### Jonesin' Crossword

By Matt Jones

**"The Birthday Game"---not the right calendar section.**  
by Matt Jones

**Across**

1 Rootless aquatic plant

5 "Don't make me laugh!"

8 Steve Irwin exclamation

14 Mario Kart character

15 Modern prefix with tourism

16 Emu or ostrich, e.g.

17 "The \$64,000 Question" emcee born one month too late?

19 "The Audacity of Hope" family

20 Have \_\_\_\_ of mystery

21 Hanna-Barbera feline

23 Ready to leave the queue

25 One of many during 2021 for "Jeopardy!"

26 Mike the Tiger's sch.

29 Like some ciders

30 "Green Acres" costar Eva

32 Godparent, sometimes

33 "Fences" playwright born four months too soon?

36 Tennis variation

39 2018 Hannah Gadsby stand-up special with quite a few serious moments

40 "Mad Men" actress born ... in exactly the right month?

42 Take \_\_\_\_ (lose money)

43 Purchasing agent

44 Onyx or opal

47 College maj. for instrumentalists

48 Tabletop gamer, stereotypically

50 Unlikely to fall over

52 Girl with a flock

54 "\_\_\_\_ Rock 'n' Roll" (Joan Jett & the Blackhearts song)

55 Leo's home?

58 Queen guitarist/astrophysicist born two months too late?

60 Mission to the moon

61 French dressing ingredient no longer regulated by the FDA

62 Frigid finish

63 Most bleached out

64 T-shirt size that may cost slightly more

65 SFO listings

**Down**

1 Convenient

2 Ride while you wait for repairs

3 Andromeda, for one

4 Fess up

5 "I'm with \_\_\_\_" (2016 campaign slogan)

6 Bank holding, briefly

7 Sounds from mall Santas

8 Holey footwear

9 Morocco's capital

10 "Let's just leave \_\_\_\_ that"

11 Family that runs the "Convenience" store in a Canadian sitcom

12 Greek vowel

13 "That's pretty much it"

18 Rocket, in the U.S.

22 Surname of Roth's complainer

24 Alerter of the 2000s

26 Deadly sin

27 Little twerp

28 "Reader" whose last print edition was in 2019

31 Industrious sort

32 Taproom orders

33 Push up against

34 Decreases

35 Newtonian topic

36 Late performer who once dated Nicole Richie and Mandy Moore

37 "Hawaii Five-O" setting

38 Les Etats-\_\_\_\_

41 Bar fixture

44 Wallace's dog

45 Composer Grieg

46 "Aaagh! That's way too bright!"

48 Count for MLS or NHL games

49 Disney World attraction

51 Arm bones

52 Liver secretion

53 Grand \_\_\_\_ (auto race)

55 Anti-mosquito device sound

56 \_\_\_\_-Locka, Florida

57 U.S. currency

59 Not feeling so good

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Answers on page 23

### SUDOKU

2		6		5				
			8	9	1		2	7
	9						3	
	2		7		5			
		3	1	8	2			9
7				3		2	8	
	1							
	7		4		9		5	1
	3	5	2	1	8		9	

### Beginner

**TO PLAY**

Fill in the grid so that every row, column, and outlined 3-by-3 box contains the numbers 1 through 9 exactly once. No guessing is required. The solution is unique.

Answers on page 24

### Free Will Astrology

By Rob Brezsný January 26-February 1, 2022

**ARIES (March 21-April 19):** Author Helen Hunt Jackson said that one component of happiness is "a little less time than you want." Why? Because you always "have so many things you want to see, to have, and to do" and "no day is quite long enough for all you would like to get done before you go to bed." I propose you experiment with this definition in the coming weeks. According to my astrological analysis, you will have even more interesting assignments and challenges than usual—as well as a brimming vitality that will make it possible for you to accomplish many but not all of them. Your happiness should be abundant!

**TAURUS (April 20-May 20):** Born under the sign of Taurus, Ethel Smyth (1858-1944) had considerable skills as a composer of music, an athlete, an author, a passionate lover, and an activist working for women's rights. She was successful in all of them. I propose we make her one of your role models for the coming months. Why? First, because she did more than one thing really well, and you are now primed to enhance your versatility, flexibility, and adaptability. Second, because she described a formula for high achievement that would suit you well. She said, "Night after night I went to sleep murmuring, 'Tomorrow I will be easy, strong, quick, supple, accurate, dashing and self-controlled all at once!'" (PS: I suggest you make 'supple' your word of power in 2022.)

**GEMINI (May 21-June 20):** According to author Olivia Dresher, "Feelings want to be free. Thoughts want to be right." Well, then, what about intuitions? In a sense, they're hybrids of feelings and thoughts. They're a way of knowing that transcends both feelings and thoughts. When intuitions come from the clear-seeing part of your deep psyche rather than the fear-prone part of your conditioning, they are sweet and fun and accurate and humble and brisk and pure. They don't "want" to be anything. I'm pleased to inform you, Gemini, that in the coming weeks, your intuitions will be working at peak efficiency. It should be relatively easy for you to distinguish between the clear-seeing and fear-prone modes of intuition.

**CANCER (June 21-July 22):** "If you are going to do something wrong, at least enjoy it," wrote humorist Leo Rosten. I offer his counsel to you right now because I want you to have fun if you wander away from your usual upstanding behavior. But may I make a suggestion? As you depart from normal, boring niceness, please remain honorable and righteous. What I'm envisioning for you are experiments that are disruptive in healthy ways, and dares that stir up interesting problems, and rebellious explorations that inspire beauty and truth. They'll be "wrong" only in the sense of being mutinies against static, even stagnant, situations that should indeed be prodded and pricked. Remember Bob Dylan's idea: "To live outside the law, you must be honest."

**LEO (July 23-Aug. 22):** Leo actor Anna Kendrick bragged, "I'm so humble it's crazy. I'm like the Kanye West of humility." I'd like to see you adopt that extravagant approach to expressing your magnificence in the coming weeks. I hope you'll add another perspective to your repertoire, too—this one from Leo actor Mae West. She exulted, "Too much of a good thing can be wonderful!" Here's one further attitude I encourage you to incorporate, courtesy of Leo author Rachel Pollack: "To learn to play seriously is one of the great secrets of spiritual exploration."

**VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22):** Sammy Davis Jr. (1925-1990) was multi-talented: an actor, singer, comedian, and dancer. One critic described him as "the greatest entertainer ever to grace a stage." He didn't think highly of his own physical appearance, however. "I know I'm dreadfully ugly," Davis said, "one of the ugliest men you could meet. But ugliness, like beauty, is something you must learn how to use." That's an interesting lesson to meditate on. I think it's true that each of us has rough, awkward, irregular aspects—if not in our physical appearance, then in our psyches.

And yet, as Davis suggested, we can learn to not just tolerate those qualities, but use them to our advantage. Now is a favorable time for you to do that.

**LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22):** "It is the nature of love to work in a thousand different ways," wrote the mystic Saint Teresa of Avila. According to my analysis of the astrological omens, you're due to discover new and different ways to wield your love magic—in addition to the many you already know and use. For best results, you'll have to be willing to depart from old reliable methods for expressing care and tenderness and nurturing. You must be willing to experiment with fresh approaches that may require you to stretch yourself. Sounds like fun to me!

**SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21):** "If you are drilling for water, it's better to drill one 60-foot well than 10 six-foot wells," advised author and religious scholar Huston Smith. He was using well-drilling as a metaphor, of course—as a symbol for solving a problem, for example, or developing a spiritual practice, or formulating an approach to psychological healing. The metaphor might not be perfectly applicable for everyone in every situation. But I believe it is vividly apropos for you and your current situations.

**SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21):** A well-worn proverb tells us, "All good things come to those who wait." There's a variation, whose author is unknown (although it's often misattributed to Abraham Lincoln): "Things may come to those who wait, but only the things left behind by those who hustle." I think that's far more useful advice for you in the coming weeks. I'd much rather see you hustle than wait. Here's a third variant, which may be the best counsel of all. It's by author Holly Woodward: "All good things come to those who bait."

**CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19):** Author Harriet Beecher Stowe wrote, "To be really great in little things, to be truly noble and heroic in the insipid details of everyday life, is a virtue so rare as to be worthy of canonization." I agree, which is why I authorize you to add "Saint" to the front of your name in the coming weeks. There's an excellent chance you will fit the description Stowe articulated. You'll be at the peak of your power to elevate the daily rhythm into a stream of subtle marvels. You'll be quietly heroic. If you're not fond of the designation "Saint," you could use the Muslim equivalent term, "Wali," the Jewish "Tzadik," Buddhist "Arhat," or Hindu "Swami."

**AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18):** Since the iconoclastic planet Uranus is a chief symbol for the Aquarian tribe, you people are more likely to be dissenters and mavericks and questioners than all the other signs. That doesn't mean your departures from orthodoxy are always successful or popular. Sometimes you meet resistance from the status quo. Having offered that caveat, I'm happy to announce that in the coming weeks, your unique offerings are more likely than usual to be effective. For inspiration, read these observations by author Kristine Kathryn Rusch: "Rebels learn the rules better than the rule-makers do. Rebels learn where the holes are, where the rules can best be breached. Become an expert at the rules. Then break them with creativity and style."

**PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20):** Piscean author Juansen Dizon tells us, "Don't find yourself in places where people have it all figured out." That's always good advice, but it will be especially germane for you in the coming weeks and months. You need the catalytic stimulation that comes from associating with curious, open-minded folks who are committed to the high art of not being know-it-alls. The influences you surround yourself with will be key in your efforts to learn new information and master new skills. And that will be an essential assignment for you throughout 2022.

Go to [RealAstrology.com](http://RealAstrology.com) to check out Rob Brezsný's EXPANDED WEEKLY AUDIO HOROSCOPES and DAILY TEXT MESSAGE HOROSCOPES. The audio horoscopes are also available by phone at 1-877-873-4888 or 1-900-950-7700.



# A Hunter's Tale

City Pulse is serializing "A Hunter's Tale," by Ryan Claytor, throughout January. This is the final installment.



14



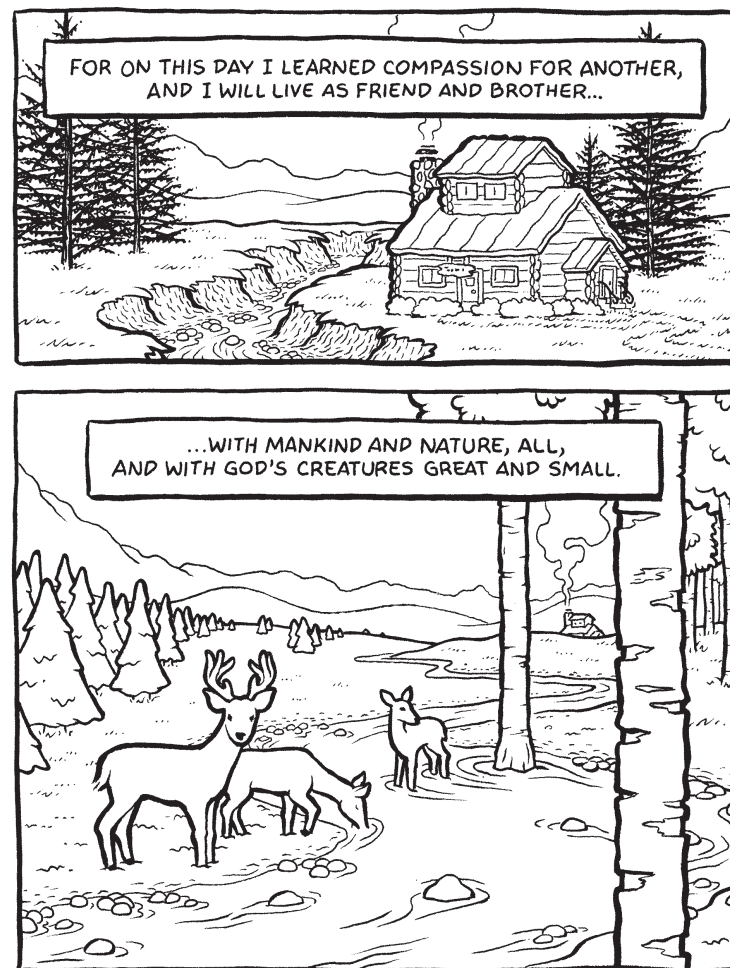
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To learn more about "A Hunter's Tale," visit [ahunterstale.com](http://ahunterstale.com)

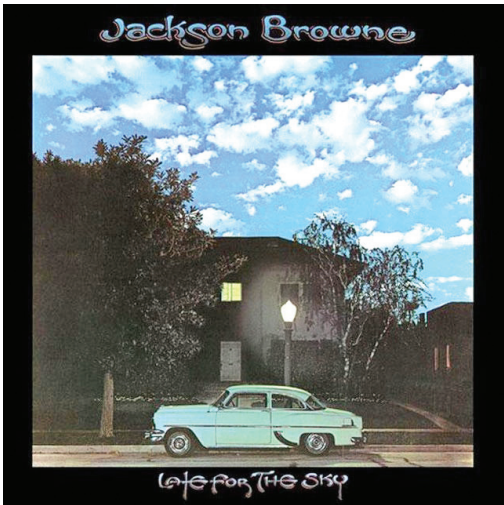


# TURN IT DOWN!

Loud dispatches from Lansing’s music scene

BY RICH TUPICA

LIFE-CHANGING ALBUMS: CHRISTOPHER A. WARDELL TALKS  
“LATE FOR THE SKY,” BY JACKSON BROWNE



Christopher A Wardell is a longtime Lansing music scene vet, but he’s also deep into the legendary Los Angeles-based songwriter Jackson Browne. (courtesy images)

## Scene vet dishes on his love for a classic 1974 singer-songwriter album

Christopher A. Wardell is a self-proclaimed “long-time hanger-on” of the local music scene since 1994.

While he doesn’t front bands himself, his resume includes past stints managing the ’90s noise bands Limb Willis, Hot Like Vegas and The Grey Electric. Wardell has also contributed to ETCH Magazine, Music Revue, Jambands.com, Relix Magazine, City Pulse and the Lansing State Journal.

Today, while still remaining a full-time music buff, he is also the legislative director for state Rep. Cynthia A. Johnson and freelance writes for EastLansingInfo.com. In his off hours, he also “helps” Lansing’s From Big Sur and co-hosts a podcast called “The Vinyl Cut.” He’s a rabid collector of music, and he lives in East Lansing with his wife and son.

**Here is what Wardell had to say about his pick for a life-changing album:**

My parents were huge Jackson Browne fans, so by default, I’m now a huge fan, too. When I was 5 or 6, I got to play frisbee with him on the hill at Pine Knob — screw the DTE name. It’s Pine Knob — and he signed a program that I still have to this day. He was my mom’s favorite artist, and “Late for The Sky” was her favorite record, too.

Growing up, it was all Browne, Van Morrison, Joni Mitchell, Carol King from my mom’s side, while my dad was into Rush, Black Sabbath and Deep Purple, as well as REO, Seger and Uriah Heep. Best of both worlds, right? I have an uncle who got me into KISS, which is another life-long obsession which probably warrants another story, but we’ll stick with Browne here.

For the most part, Jackson Browne is kind of a downer, which I think is what gives him a bad rap. His music is highly introspective and poetic and he was writing songs for people like Nico (of The Velvet Underground) before he was 20. Songs like “These Days” has been covered numerous times by everyone from Gregg Allman to Dawes. Jackson was mostly fun and games until my mother passed in 1996. Suddenly, his music became different to me, and I found myself immersed in his 1975 classic, “Late for The Sky.” Again, my mother’s favorite, but one I had never embraced.

Browne fell out of favor to me as my music tastes ran through Metallica, Guns N’ Roses, into grunge, and Lollapalooza bands. It went from Smashing Pumpkins and Beastie Boys, to noise acts like Jesus Lizard and Unwound. Eventually, the Grateful Dead and Phish found me

and that was all I ever wanted to listen to — and still do today.

But Jackson always came a calling.

The opening track, the album’s title track, “Late For The Sky,” tells the story of two lovers who discover they really don’t love each other at all until it’s too late. It takes repeated listens before you understand the depths of this song. You don’t have much time to catch your breath as you’re immediately hit by the heartbreakers “Fountain of Sorrow,” “Farther On,” and “For a Dancer,” which is a song about trying to understand death, which, I was literally trying to understand death at the time.

There are two songs about leaving home, “The Late Show” and “The Road and The Sky.” Then you get a brief reprieve from the lost love, death and disillusionment with the blow-off, jokester song “Walking Slow,” before Browne brings it all down with the apocalyptic “Before the Deluge,” which feels oddly familiar with the world’s current state of affairs.

People give me crap about my love of Jackson Browne, but his music only turned me onto more amazing singer-songwriters, including Warren Zevon, Lowell George (of Little Feat), Bruce Cockburn, Joni Mitchell, Tim Buckley,

Bob Dylan — on and on.

Browne was one of three concerts I went to last year, Phish the other two. He served as the opening act for James Taylor at Pine Knob in June. Browne slammed through the hits, finally closing with the still rocking, and probably the song most people know: “Running On Empty.”

Yes, Browne played “Late for the Sky” that night, and it hit hard as I looked off into the Michigan sunset and thinking about my mom. How fun it would’ve been to go to shows with her as an adult? Oh well, we’ll always have the records.

CROSSWORD SOLUTION

From Pg. 21

A	L	G	A		H	A	H		C	R	I	K	E	Y
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# OUT on the TOWN

## Events & Happenings in Lansing This Week

Events must be entered through the calendar at [lansingcitypulse.com](http://lansingcitypulse.com). Deadline is 5 p.m. Wednesdays for the following week's issue. Charges may apply for paid events to appear in print. If you need assistance, please call Suzi at (517) 999-6704.

### LIVE + LOCAL

#### B&I Bar

5247 Old Lansing Rd., Lansing  
**Keith Minaya**  
Thurs., Jan. 27, 7:30-10:30 p.m.  
**Joe Wright**  
Fri. Jan., 28, 8:30-11:30 p.m.

#### Blue Owl

1149 S Washington, Lansing  
**Elden Kelly and Gregg Hill**  
Thurs., Jan. 27, 6-8 p.m.

#### Classic Pub & Grill

16219 N. US 27, Lansing  
**Velocity Shift**  
Fri., Jan. 28, 8:30 p.m.  
**Krosby Conspiracy**  
Sat., Jan. 29, 8:30 p.m.

#### Eaton Rapids Craft Co.

204 N. Main St., Eaton Rapids  
**Jake VanRavenswaay**  
Fri., Jan. 28, 7-10 p.m.  
**Deacon Earl**  
Sat. Jan. 29, 7-10 p.m.

#### The Exchange

314 E. Michigan Ave., Lansing  
**Off The Ledge**  
Fri., January 28, 5 p.m.- close  
**Atomic Annie**  
Sat., January 29, 6 p.m.-close

#### Green Door

2005 E. Michigan Ave., Lansing  
**Smooth Daddy**  
Fri., Jan. 28, 8:30 p.m.  
**The Rotations**  
Sat., Jan. 29, 8:30 p.m.

#### Lansing Brewing Company

518 E. Shiawassee St., Lansing  
**Darin Lerner Band**  
Sat., Jan. 29, 8 p.m.-10:30 p.m.

#### Urban Beat

1213 N. Turner St., Lansing  
**Anna p.s.**  
Thurs., Jan. 27, 7-11 p.m.  
**Michael Reed Quartet**  
Sat., Jan. 29, 7 p.m. - midnight



### Lansing Winter Vendor Market at Meridian Mall

**Saturday, Jan. 29, 10 a.m. to 9 p.m.**  
**Sunday, Jan. 30, noon to 6 p.m.**

**Meridian Mall**  
1982 W. Grand River Road, Okemos,  
**Meridianmall.com**  
(517) 349-2031

This weekend, a swathe of local artisan vendors gathered by the Michigan Shoppers Market is coming at the Meridian Mall for a special wintertime market. Items being dealt by these local vendors include special handmade bath products, tarot cards, custom T-shirts and various locally produced edible treats and baked goods. If you are looking to pick up some gifts for yourself or friends and family, while supporting small Michigan-based businesses, this is the place.

### Wednesday, January 26

**2022 Speaker Series: Economy 2022** - 9-11 a.m. Crystal Gardens Banquet Center, 5768 E. Grand River Rd., Howell. [brightoncoc.org](http://brightoncoc.org).

**Allen Farmers Market** - 3-6 p.m. Allen Market Place, 1611 E Kalamazoo, Lansing.

**Blind Date with a Book** - Grand Ledge Area District Library, 131 E. Jefferson St., Grand Ledge. 517-627-7014. [gladl.org](http://gladl.org)

**The Elements Series: Water** - through March 19. 11 a.m.-7 p.m. Nelson Gallery, 113 S. Washington Sq. [thenelsongallery.com](http://thenelsongallery.com).

**Pack 401 Recruitment Night** - Interested in joining Cub Scouts or Scouts BSA? 7-8 p.m. Judson Memorial Church, 531 Glendale Ave., Lansing. 517-290-0998.

**Steak Night at Reo Town Pub** - \$14 Dine in and \$16 Take out 5:30-8 p.m. Reo Town Pub, 1145 S. Washington Ave., Lansing.

**Threads of Wisdom: The Self and Act of Power** - in-person or Zoom. 6:30-7:30 p.m. Weavers of the Web, 809 Center St, Ste 7, Lansing. 517-657-5800. [weaversoftheweb.org](http://weaversoftheweb.org).

**Mark Hahn, Artist** - featured artist through January 31. Katalyst Art Gallery, 1214 Turner Rd., Lansing. 517-708-8916.

### Thursday, January 27

**East Lansing Roller Derby Basic Skills Boot Camp** - 8-10 p.m. Court One Training Center, 7868 Old M-78, East Lansing.

### Friday, January 28

**Amazing Art** - 9:45 a.m. Impression 5 Science Center, 200 Museum Dr, Lansing. 517-485-8116. [impression5.org](http://impression5.org).

### Saturday, January 29

**Amazing Art** - 9:45 a.m. Impression 5 Science Center, 200 Museum Dr, Lansing. 517-485-8116. [impression5.org](http://impression5.org).

**Starlight Snowshoe** - Enjoy a self-guided snowshoe walk on the trails. Bring your own or rent a pair HNC. 7-9 p.m. Harris Nature Center, 3998 Van Atta, Okemos. [meridian.mi.us](http://meridian.mi.us).

### Sunday, January 30

**Chamber Music with Percussion** - 3 p.m. Lansing. [www.lansingsymphony.org](http://www.lansingsymphony.org).

**Kids day** - 1-4 p.m. Absolute Gallery, 307 E Grand River Ave, Lansing. 517-482-8845. [absoluteartgallery.net](http://absoluteartgallery.net).

**East Lansing Roller Derby Basic Skills Boot Camp** - 8-10 p.m. Court One Training Center, 7868 Old M-78, East Lansing.

**Wild and Scenic Film Festival** - 6-8:30 p.m. Online. For link: [mgrow.org](http://mgrow.org).

### Monday, January 31

**Comedy Night** - 9-11:30 p.m. Crunchy's, 254 W Grand River Ave, East Lansing. 517-351-2506. [crunchyseastlansing.com](http://crunchyseastlansing.com).

**Monday Night Bingo** - Adult Bingo at the Reo Town Pub. 7-9 p.m. Reo Town Pub, 1145 S. Washington Ave., Lansing.

**Workshop - Connecting to your Needs** - 6-6:30 p.m. Foster Community Center, 200 N Foster Ave, Lansing. 517-483-4233. [parksonline.lansingmi.gov](http://parksonline.lansingmi.gov).

### Tuesday, February 1

**"Best Books" Tiny Art Show** - 10 a.m.-9 p.m. Grand Ledge Library, 131 E. Jefferson St., Grand Ledge. 517-627-7014. [gladl.org](http://gladl.org).

**Board Game Meet Up** - Ages 18 & up. 6:30 - 10:30 p.m. Spare Time Bowling Alley, 3101 E Grand River, Lansing.

**Hidden Hearts** - 10 a.m.-9 p.m. Grand Ledge Area District Library, 131 E. Jefferson St., Grand Ledge. 517-627-7014. [gladl.org](http://gladl.org)

**MILibraryQuest** - Mystery Edition 2022 for teens. 10 a.m.-9 p.m. Grand Ledge Area District Library, 131 E. Jefferson St., Grand Ledge. [milibraryquest.wixsite.com](http://milibraryquest.wixsite.com).

**Preschool Family Storytime** - 11-11:30 a.m. Grand Ledge Area District Library, 131 E. Jefferson St. [gladl.org](http://gladl.org).

**Sporcle Live! Trivia** - 7:30 & 8:30 p.m. Crunchy's, 254 W Grand River Ave, East Lansing. [crunchyseastlansing.com](http://crunchyseastlansing.com).

### SUDOKU SOLUTION

From Pg. 21

2	8	6	3	5	7	9	1	4
3	5	4	8	9	1	6	2	7
1	9	7	6	2	4	5	3	8
9	2	8	7	4	5	1	6	3
5	6	3	1	8	2	4	7	9
7	4	1	9	3	6	2	8	5
6	1	9	5	7	3	8	4	2
8	7	2	4	6	9	3	5	1
4	3	5	2	1	8	7	9	6



# FOOD & DRINK

## DINING OUT IN GREATER LANSING

### Winter greens

By **ARI LeVAUX**

The farmers market used to be more of a summertime thing. When the landscape turns brown and white, our thoughts don't rush off to the next farmer's market. But don't sleep on – or through – the winter farmer's market. The colors of fresh veggies seem all the more vibrant against the grim backdrop of winter, and the flavors are like much-needed tastes of sunshine.

I live in Montana, which is about as close to Canada as you can get without a passport, and even there the diversity of produce at the winter market is astounding. Here and now in the middle of a Montana winter, I just ate a glorious salad of local greens that looks like it came straight out of July.

We owe this winter bounty to a perfect storm of changes. Warmer temperatures have tilted the growing field toward winter growth, furthered by advances in greenhouse technology, and funded by increasing hunger for local food, which makes it increasingly worthwhile for farmers to pay for heat – in return for year-round profits.

Northern farmers have been inching in this direction for years. Before it became common to pay to heat their greenhouses, farmers were extending their growing seasons with tricks like building little hoop houses inside big greenhouses and covering these greenhouse crops for extra warmth. Back then, if a farmer heated a greenhouse, it was usually to start finicky plants like tomatoes, cucumbers and peppers, in order to give them enough of a head start that they would bear fruit.

It was about two years ago that I noticed a sharp increase in the winter market greenery. The daring farmer had no trouble selling her tender greens. I noticed the other growers taking notice of her success, and the idea spread like weeds.

Today, the winter greenhouse bounty at the mid-January market includes arugula, bok choy, broccoli, lettuce, kale, parsley, cilantro and celery. The usual winter storage crops are for sale too, as well as protein-rich foods such as dried beans, cheese, eggs, beef, pork, chicken and even local saltwater



shrimp from a guy who grows them in a tank. And there are baked goods and condiments and value-added delicacies like maple syrup, hot sauce, dried tomatoes and other fruit.

With raw ingredients such as these, we have many options for making a satisfying winter meal. I like to make a hearty winter-style stew with meat, potatoes, carrots, celery and onions, and serve it with as many raw garnishes as possible, like chopped raw onion and fresh parsley or cilantro. It's a northern version of pho – a Vietnamese meaty stew with fresh herbs.

Another way to enjoy this bounty is to add winter greens to potato salad, along with shredded carrots, hard boiled eggs, garlic and onions, add kale, parsley and whatever else you can score that makes sense. Alternatively, make a grain salad, with cooked wheat or quinoa tossed with chopped parsley, garlic, onions and cheese, all tossed in a tangy vinaigrette.

Those recipe ideas all lead to a satisfying, hearty place. But now that winter is the new summer, why not go with a straight green salad? The only thing glaringly absent from a bowl of winter greens would be the luscious tomatoes of summer. We make dehydrated tomatoes at home, in the peak of summer when fresh tomatoes are cheapest. In a salad, these dried tomatoes offer a similar sweet tang to the summer version, but with less juice.

The farmer's markets of summer get all the glory, but pound for pound, the winter markets have more guts. These off-season centers of home-grown commerce, which run from about Halloween through Easter, are like the distilled essence of their summer counterparts, smaller but more potent. Cuter, with more hot cocoa.

Here's a recipe for a tangy dressing that goes great on fresh greens and is

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Courtesy

A wintertime salad prepared by Ari LeVaux using fresh greens and tomatoes.

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# Salad

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easily customized into enough different variations to dress any salad.

## Tangy Winter Salad

The first time I made this salad I ravaged it like it was steak drenched with wine sauce, and I had just come home from war. The dressing recipe comes from [sweetpeasandsaffron.com](http://sweetpeasandsaffron.com), and includes several variations, which I will note below.

You probably won't have access to the exact same array of leaves that I got last week at the market. It doesn't matter. Get what you can. But for the sake of education, here is what I used.

## Tangy White Wine Vinegar Dressing

$\frac{1}{2}$  cup white wine vinegar  
 $\frac{1}{2}$  cup extra virgin olive oil  
 1 teaspoon Dijon mustard  
 1 tablespoon maple syrup  
 Salt and pepper to taste (don't skimp on the salt)

Variations on this Dressing

Asian variation: add some toasted sesame oil

Chile Lime variation: add some chili powder, garlic and lime juice

Fajita sauce variation: chili powder, paprika, cumin and lime juice

Zesty lemon version: lemon juice and zest

Combine and mix the ingredients.

## Salad Recipe

I'm hesitant to give a specific ingredient list because your instructions are simply to go get greens at the winter market and build a salad around them, dressed with one of the above variations, along with onions, cheese and garlic, which you can reliably find at most winter markets. I'll leave the quantities flexible, too. It's a salad, not a croissant.

Greens (I used red leaf lettuce, curly kale, baby spinach, arugula and parsley)

Sliced onions

Dehydrated tomatoes if you got them

Pressed garlic

Hard cheese like Romano, grated, or crumbled feta

Tangy White Wine Vinegar Dressing, above (original version, no variation)

Remove the ribs from the kale leaves. Massage the remaining foliage by squeezing and mashing it between your hands. Rip or cut it down to bite size pieces. Chop the lettuce and parsley as well. Leave the arugula and baby spinach whole.

Add the leaves, onions and dehydrated tomatoes to a large salad bowl and toss them with the pressed garlic. Toss in the salad dressing. Add the cheese to the top and toss again if you wish or let the cheese mix as you serve it.

(Flash in the Pan is food writer Ari LeVaux's weekly recipe column. It runs in about 100 newspapers nationwide, nourishing food sections large and small with complete protein for the belly brain.)

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